



Councillor confident area will share investment success

# £41m BOOST TO BENEFIT ALL

Report by Richard Guttridge

**AN ambitious £41 million bid for funding will benefit all parts of Dudley borough for years to come, says a senior councillor from Halesowen.**

Karen Shakespeare was confident that major investment in Dudley town centre could only help areas like Halesowen prosper too.

The councillor for Halesowen South was speaking after a bid for funding to transform neglected parts of the borough was launched.

Councillor Shakespeare said: "Anything that puts Dudley on the map is good for all the centres right across the Dudley borough. If we can prove we are worth supporting and have got something to offer at the end of the day it is going to benefit every town centre and hopefully bring investment in."

"We have had the BID (business improvement district) here in Halesowen and that has been a success, so there are certainly things happening right across the borough."



Karen Shakespeare

## Kick-start

The money would kick-start both the Porters Field retail development on land around derelict Cavendish House in Dudley town centre and the overhaul of the town's bus station.

Details were unveiled within hours of crucial funding for the long-awaited Very Light Rail (VLR) project on the site of the town's former train station at Castle Hill being given the go-ahead. The Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) has approved an £18.5m grant to help fund a transport innovation centre and test track.

West Midlands Mayor Andy Street met with council bosses in Dudley on Tuesday with both the fresh funding bid and the VLR scheme forming part of the discussions.

The £41m is being sought partly from the LEP and partly from the West Midlands Combined Authority, which Mr Street chairs.

In total the town centre schemes could help in the creation of up to 300 jobs.

## THE TOWN IS LOOKING BLOOMING GREAT AGAIN



Elaine Cannis, Eve O'Connor and Cllr Hilary Bills celebrate Halesowen in Bloom winning the urban community award at Heart of England in Bloom

HALESOWEN has come top of the tree when it comes to looking blooming gorgeous.

The town's Halesowen in Bloom group won the category Urban Community of the year at this year's Heart of England in Bloom awards.

Judges praised the team for the quality of hanging baskets, the standard and maintenance of plants and the efforts of shopkeepers, who have supported the watering of plant troughs in the town.

The Leasowes Walled garden and finger post gardens were picked out as notable features of the town.

Eve O'Connor, chairman of Halesowen in Bloom, said: "We have entered for four years, and in that time we have picked up a silver gilt and three golds."

"It has been particularly impressive this year as we have had to overcome challenges such as taking on more tasks, such as the watering of plants."

"Next year we will be looking at the heritage of the town, such as the button industry."

Around 180 delegates from villages, towns, urban communities and cities attended the presentation for this year's awards at Warwick Castle.

President of Heart of England in Bloom, Les Goodman, said: "The judges are well aware of the hard work, commitment and enthusiasm that go into an entry."

## HERITAGE

### Hippodrome dream comes to 'standstill'

THE restoration of Dudley Hippodrome has been thrown into doubt as a 'crucial' meeting with council bosses is set to determine its future.

Campaigners say they may not be able to fund their bid to bring the landmark theatre building back to life with just a five-year lease.

A statement released on behalf of the group said they had come to a 'standstill'. It reads: "We always knew that the lease was nowhere near long enough but we had no alternative."

A fundraising drive to raise £10,000 towards renovation was launched last month.

## TRAVEL

### Velo means rolling road closures ahead

THERE will be road closures in and around Dudley borough when some 15,000 cyclists tackle the charity fundraising Velo Birmingham cycling race on Sunday.

The 100-mile route goes from Birmingham city centre and back through the Black Country, Staffordshire and Worcestershire, including Halesowen, Stourton, Wombourne, Kinver, Clent and Romsley.

## SPORT

### New artificial football pitch at school site

ARTIFICIAL grass football and training pitches will be installed to boost sports facilities at a secondary school in Dudley.

Hillcrest School in Simms Lane, Netherton, has been granted permission for the project, which includes an 11-a-side football pitch as well as youth football pitches, mini soccer pitches, training areas, spectator space and equipment storage.

## INSIDE

### GOING ANIMAL CRACKERS



PAGE 12

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2 CONTENTS

PETER RHODES	6
LETTERS	7
LIFESTYLE	18
GARDENING	20
THE TICKET	25
BRAIN GYM	31
MOTORING	37 & 38
SPORT	39 & 40
CONTACT US	

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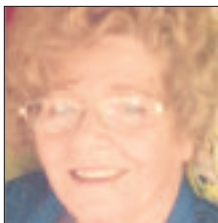
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# Accident victim's family reveal anguish



Phyllis Fielding

THE family of an 88-year-old woman who died after being hit by an Iceland delivery van in Wordsley have said they are utterly devastated.

Phyllis May Fielding died in hospital after being hit by the van on September 8 outside the Sainsbury's Local supermarket on Lawnswood Road in Wordsley.

She was taken to Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham following the accident, that took place at around 1.15pm.

The Midland Air Ambulance flew in

from Cosford but she was taken to hospital by land ambulance. A doctor and critical-care paramedic brought in on the air ambulance continued treatment on the way to the hospital.

The driver involved in the incident stopped at the scene and assisted the police with their investigations.

In a statement, the family of Phyllis Fielding said: "We are utterly devastated to have lost our loving mom, nan and great-nan in such tragic circumstances.

"We, as a family, ask for privacy

and time to grieve at this very difficult time."

At the time of the incident, West Midlands Ambulance Service spokesman Jamie Arrowsmith had said: "We were called at 1.17pm to Lawnswood Road to reports of a collision between a van and a pedestrian."

The road was closed for a period after the collision.

Anyone who saw the collision and hasn't yet spoken to police can email [FL\\_COLLISION\\_INVEST@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk](mailto:FL_COLLISION_INVEST@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk)

# Hell on the highways as more works loom

**DRIVERS are set to face more roadworks misery over the coming weeks.**

Roads will continue to be dug up in and out of Wolverhampton later this month, while in Sandwell and Dudley motorists will be hit by delays into Blackheath starting from next week.

The A4123 Birmingham New Road will close to motorists for two weeks from September 25 in the Lanesfield area as work is carried out to resurface the road.

It is currently part of a diversion route in and out of the city as the A41 Bilston Road remains closed to inbound traffic.

The resurfacing work will continue until October 9 and will take place from 8pm to 5am during weekdays.

Signs have already been put in place by the council, warning motorists of the works and potential delays.

## Battle

Already drivers looking to enter the city centre have to battle against lane restrictions to cross the St George's tram stop and Piper's Row.

Meanwhile in Dudley, traffic chaos is anticipated for up to four weeks when a major route into Blackheath is resurfaced.

Council bosses say work will be carried out on Long Lane, Halesowen, from near The Stag and Three Horseshoes pub to Shell Corner. It was due to start on Tuesday and would see stop/start signs used which will limit the speed of traffic between 9.30am and 3pm.

The work should be completed by October 5 with phase two following next year.

Councillor Stuart Henley: "This work is needed to be done because of the road surface and potholes. It will cause chaos but I just hope that disruption is kept to a minimum."

Sandwell Cycles owner, Peter Wilson, on Long Lane, said he fears the work will cause him to lose custom. He said: "It is a struggle for us small businesses as it is."

## Parade honours air war heroes



Young and old pay tribute – the Battle of Britain parade in Dudley led to Top Church for a special service

HEROES from the Battle of Britain were remembered at a parade and church service in Dudley.

Serving RAF personnel, veterans and cadets were on parade from outside the Council House through the town centre to Top Church (St Thomas & St Luke), a church which itself was damaged

by the Luftwaffe on a bombing raid in 1940.

A service of thanksgiving was held at the church, before the laying of wreaths at the cenotaph in Ednam Road.

Mayor of Dudley Councillor Dave Tyler hailed the support of the crowds paying tribute to those who

fought in Britain's skies to halt the Nazi invasion.

The Rt Rev Graham Usher, the Bishop of Dudley, said: "We are giving thanks for the valiant few, who – against all odds – set their lives against aggression, in the hope that all nations may enjoy justice and peace."

# Machete thug sent to prison

A MACHETE attacker who tried to kill a mother and her two-year-old son along with another man has been jailed for a total of 28 years.

Mohammed Tabriz launched attacks on his victims in Smethwick and Birmingham.

The violence began when he attacked a man aged 19 at an address in Hales Lane, Smethwick, on the evening of December 6 last year.

He left his victim with serious head injuries, before moving on to Washwood Heath, six miles away, where he then turned on his female victim, aged 28.

She was left with serious head injuries, while her son was also injured.

Tabriz was arrested, but denied involvement and tried to get others to corroborate alibis.

Detective Sergeant Jamie Mason revealed: "He said he was at home asleep at the time of the attacks, but we found compelling evidence which placed him at the scenes of the crimes.

"Tabriz had suspected his estranged wife was having an affair and this is thought to have been what had motivated him."

Tabriz, aged 36 from Fentham Road, Aston, was found guilty of three charges of attempted murder after a nine-day trial at Birmingham Crown Court.

# Drugs find after call to burglary

HUNDREDS of cannabis plants were found by police after they were called to reports of a burglary in Halesowen.

Around 500 plants were discovered growing in the property in Nimmings Road, Halesowen, when officers carried out the raid just before 2am on Tuesday.

Three men have been arrested in connection with the incident.

Kadeon Whyte, aged 30, from St Chads Road, Bilston, was charged with possession of cannabis and bailed to appear at Nimmings Magistrates Court on September 28.

A 25-year-old man remained in custody on suspicion of cultivation of cannabis and a 23-year-old, who had been arrested on suspicion of burglary, was released without charge.

# Classic cars go on show at glass cone

CLASSIC cars are coming to an historic site in Wordsley next weekend.

The Black Country Classic Car Club will be displaying more than 20 of their vehicles at the Red House Glass Cone on Sunday.

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## NEWS IN BRIEF

### More big names come to Merry Hill

THREE new shops are set to come to Merry Hill shopping centre as part of its latest stage of its revamp.

Bosses say Skechers, Tessuti and Cath Kidson will join the existing offer at the popular Brierley Hill mall over the coming months.

A spokesperson said: "Intu Merry Hill is in strong demand and, as such, we want to make sure that we keep bringing the very best retailers into the area."

"A number of exciting new brands are due to take their first stores within the centre very soon, including Skechers, Tessuti and Cath Kidson, whilst a number of existing retailers, such as Next are also extending their stores."

The latest development follows Merry Hill owners announcing they would deliver a £100 million programme of improvements at the shopping centre, including a new cinema and a string of restaurants.

### Jordanne is set to open museum

PARALYMPIC double bronze medalist and tennis grand slam winner Jordanne Whitley MBE will be guest of honour at the opening of Dudley Museum.

Jordanne, who hails from Halesowen but is now based near London, will be officially opening the museum at its new Dudley Archives home. Jordanne also features in the museum's Dudley heroes gallery, where her Wimbledon kit will be on display alongside two of record-breaking jumper Joe Darby's belts and footballing legend Duncan Edwards' caps, on loan from Manchester United. The museum opens on September 30.

### Two open events at Ormiston Forge

A SECONDARY school is opening its doors to prospective students and their parents.

Ormiston Forge Academy in Cradley Heath will host the events today (Thursday) and on Saturday for children due to start secondary school in a year's time and their parents.

Doors will be open from 6pm to 8.30pm on Thursday, and 9am to noon on Saturday. For details call (01384) 566598.

### Postcode winner

A LUCKY Halesowen resident scooped a £1,000 win, thanks to their postcode.

The postcode B63 2JS won the People's Postcode Lottery's daily prize last Wednesday.

## Lenny and Dawn had been targets for racists

ACTRESS and comedian Dawn French has revealed that she and former husband Sir Lenny Henry had to employ security to protect them from racist attacks at their home after they adopted a mixed-race daughter.

The couple were subject to 'hated' from strangers with people trying to burn their house down, French said in an interview.

The Vicar of Dibley star, who was married to Dudley-born Sir Lenny between 1984 and 2010, said the attacks had made her 'steel up a bit' but admitted she felt lucky to have been in a position to bring in protection. They adopted their daughter Billie in 1991.

French said in an interview: "I fell in love with a man and he happened to be black and we adopted a mixed-race daughter. I only realised it was an issue when there was hatred. I had to attend to it when people tried to burn our house down and left s\*\*\* on the door. But although that was hugely disappointing and shocking, you have to get past it."

She added: "We were lucky we had a big house and a gate and could employ people to protect us when we needed it. Lots of mixed-race couples weren't so lucky."

French has spoken previously about the racism faced by Sir Lenny and their daughter, describing how someone had tried to burn down their house.

## £2m fund in bid to attract films

IT has been a setting for crime thrillers, historical dramas and zombie epics – and now millions of pounds are being set aside to attract more film productions to the West Midlands.

Funding for the creative industries in the area is being refocused on film and digital media production.

West Midlands Mayor Andy Street has announced that £2.1 million is to be put into a production fund and a new screen bureau for the region.

Creative England is in final contract negotiations with the Government to secure the major investment to bring movie productions to the region.

The West Midlands Production Fund has already supported a number of productions, including zombie horror movie The Girl With All The Gifts, which starred Gemma Arterton, Glenn Close and Paddy Considine. The apocalyptic thriller was partly filmed at Guest Hospital in Dudley and on Cannock Chase.

Jawbone and Spooks: The Greater Good were also filmed in the region and major TV productions, like Peaky Blinders, have been made at the Black Country Living Museum.

## Modern new venue for congregation



Rev Leon Evans, Rt Rev Graham Usher and James Morris MP at the opening

MEMBERS of a Black Country church has battled through hard times to open a bigger and better building for worship.

Halesowen and Rowley Regis MP James Morris officially opened the new building at LifeCentral Church in Little Cornbow.

People attending the church, formerly known as The Zion Christian Centre, had to bounce back after a fire that destroyed their auditorium back in August 2015. The blaze tore through half of their building, causing extensive damage.

Reverend Leon Evans, who has been at the church for 25 years, said: "This will be a venue for the town and the area."

"I want to add a massive thank you to people in the church and the community who have supported us over the past two years since the fire."

"The church has given over £1 million over the last two years."

The MP was joined by the Bishop of Dudley the Rt Rev Graham Usher and Mr Evans at the church, which can hold up to 600 in its new venue.

Mr Morris said: "It was fantastic

to see so many local people celebrating a real Halesowen success story. LifeCentral is not just an important part of our local faith community, but also an integral part of Halesowen's community life."

"It provides a meeting place for many different groups and organisations who offer a range of services to local people. The new refurbishment will offer the church an opportunity to build on this success, and play an even larger part in Halesowen."

LifeCentral Church has been based in Halesowen for 40 years.

## Island revamp is needed 'as soon as possible'

LONG-AWAITED work to revamp one of the Black Country's busiest roundabouts needs to be completed 'as soon as possible' to tackle congestion, a council leader warns.

The overhaul of Birchley Island at junction two of the M5 has been in the pipeline since 2014. Ongoing roadworks elsewhere on the motorway are causing serious delays for motorists using the island in Oldbury, which sits at the junctions of the M5 and Wolverhampton Road/Birmingham New Road.

Sandwell Council leader Steve Eling has called for funding for the plans to upgrade the roundabout to be handed over 'sooner rather than later' to combat the daily disruption for commuters.

The scheme preferred by the council would see changes to lanes but also involves extending Wolverhampton Road on a new roadway through the roundabout to create a two-way 'hamburger' island. That could cost around £12.7 million.

### Deliver

Councillor Eling said: "The only thing we're waiting for is the funding to actually deliver this. A lot of work has been done on junction two and now it's sitting there gathering dust."

"We need to get on with the job and get the funding – that can't come soon enough."

"A scheme has been developed that will increase the capacity at that island so it can deliver more traffic. It needs to be done."

The 'hamburger' scheme, which would see the island split to allow traffic to run through the centre of it, was approved by planners last year.

If and when the work begins, it is expected to take two years to complete.

Last year, the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) – a crucial funding source for the scheme – said it was not set to award any cash from its Local Growth Fund towards the Birchley Island revamp for at least the next five years.

## Saddling up for an emotional ride



Mike and Dominik Morton during training ahead of the Velo Birmingham held in and around the city on Sunday

A FATHER is saddling up for an emotional ride in memory of his son and to honour the lifeboat crews who tried to save his life.

Luke Morton, from Bearwood, died after he was hit by a wave while standing on rocks near Cardigan in south-west Wales, where he had gone to watch seals and

dolphins on August 7 last year. His father, 61-year-old Mike, a Dudley Council health and safety officer, will take part in the inaugural 100-mile Velo Birmingham on Sunday, alongside Luke's brothers, Dominik, 30, 27-year-old Daniel and friend Tom Bowen.

They aim to add a further

£3,000 to the £4,000 already raised by the family for the RNLI which was involved in the six-hour search for Luke, 23, who had gone to school in Halesowen.

Mr Morton said: "The RNLI did everything in their powers to try and save the life of my son, whilst putting themselves at great risk"

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# Steel giants merger deal will eventually cost 4,000 jobs

**A MERGER deal between Tata Steel's European business and German giant Thyssenkrupp is set to cost around 4,000 jobs over the next few years, it was revealed yesterday (Wednesday).**

It will make sites in Wednesfield, Brierley Hill and Walsall part of a leading European steel enterprise with sales of £13 billion and a workforce of about 48,000, currently at 34 locations.

## Brum Games rival looks set to drop bid

BIRMINGHAM has taken another step towards hosting the 2022 Commonwealth Games with one of its main rivals set to pull out.

Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia is believed to be considering dropping its bid to host the Games, which would leave only Australia – already hosting the 2018 event – and Canada likely to provide competition.

It is the latest boost for the second city after it was chosen as the UK candidate ahead of Liverpool.

If Birmingham is successful, it would lead to events coming to the Black Country with Sandwell to host swimming and diving competitions, with cycling due to take place on Can-nock Chase.

It is believed the Kuala Lumpur bid is on the verge of collapse with reports suggesting that it will not be backed by the Malaysian government.

The two companies revealed in the early hours they have taken the first step towards a merger deal by signing a memorandum of understanding.

Merger talks started around 18 months ago after Tata decided not to sell its UK steel business, which currently employs around 8,500 people. That includes more than 600 in the Black Country, most of them at the Wednesfield Steelpark – the headquarters of the company's distribution business – a bakeware steel factory at Bescot in Walsall and a smaller site at Brierley Hill.

### Venture

The flat steel businesses of the two companies in Europe and the steel mill services of the Thyssenkrupp group will merge in the proposed 50:50 joint venture.

The deal will cut costs across the businesses by £350 million to £500m a year, but Thyssenkrupp warned this morning that will mean axing around 4,000 jobs over the coming years. That will include up to 2,000 administration jobs and up to 2,000 jobs in production, split across the two companies.

Andrew Robb, chairman of Tata Steel Europe, said the move was the latest step in building a sustainable future for Tata Steel in Europe.

## Not what you know but Who you know



Former Doctor Who Peter Davison with Halesowen sixth former Harry Smith

A STUDENT met a former Doctor Who at a recording session for a TV programme.

Ormiston Forge Academy sixth former Harry Smith worked as a runner and provided some vocal tracks at a session in London which featured Peter Davison, the fifth Doctor.

Teenager Harry made contact with audio production company Big Finish and was invited to the recording.

Davison, aged 66, played the Doctor on BBC TV from 1981 until 1984. He is also a familiar face on television from All Creatures Great and Small, A Very Peculiar Practice, Campion, At Home With The Braithwaites, The Last Detective and Law & Order: UK. The audio production also starred Janet Fielding, Sarah Sutton and Matthew Waterhouse, who were all companions of Davison's Doctor.

Director Barnaby Edwards said: "It's a measure of how good Harry was in the studio that I completely took him for granted after about 10 minutes. He seemed to fit in incredibly well. It's a tribute to Harry that the cast instantly took to him."

Andrew Burns, principal at Ormiston Forge Academy at Cradley Heath, said: "We try to give our students a line of sight into career pathways they are interested in. I can't thank Big Finish and the team enough for this experience and for taking time with a young person and helping to nurture his dream. The legacy of a visit such as this has far-reaching consequences."

## Fines in store as free car park abused

OLDBURY'S largest supermarket is to bring in £70 fines to target on illegal parking in a move backed by the majority of shoppers.

Sainsbury's in Freeth Street says people are leaving their vehicles at its car park without entering the store.

In response, the firm has lodged plans for four number plate recognition cameras, which will read the number plates of cars as they enter the car park. If they remain beyond the allowed three-hour time limit during store hours or 10-minute limit outside store hours the motorist will receive a fine.

Angharad Lynch, property communications manager at Sainsbury's, said: "Our customers have told us that they want to park and shop at our store. However sometimes they have difficulty doing so as non-customers use the car park for all day parking."

She added: "We are looking to install cameras which will record the time vehicles stay in our car park and allow people to use the car park for up to three hours, freeing up spaces for our customers."

The cameras will be mounted on poles within the car park, along with signs alerting the driver their registration has been taken and the time they entered. There will also be 18 new signs put up around the car park.

## Eight choirs in special music day at church

A MUSIC event takes place at a church in Halesowen later this month.

A Day Of Song will be at St John's Church in Halesowen on September 30. It starts at 10am with a music-making event for children. At 2pm eight choirs will perform. And at 7.30pm supper will be served for £10.

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## Apartments for landmark office building

PLANS for a landmark building in West Bromwich to be transformed into nearly 100 one-bedroom apartments have been welcomed.

Society House, in High Street, was the home of West Bromwich Building Society until August last year.

Developers say the current trend for the area has swayed more towards residential, despite business chiefs saying there had been 'dozens' of business inquiries when it first went on the market last year.

John Hodgkiss, co-ordinator for the West Bromwich Business Improvement District (BID), said he supported the proposals.

### Link

"We would love to be able to link in with any future development to take things further and show what West Bromwich has to offer. I would support these plans as it would be great to get more housing in the area."

The proposals, submitted last week, are for change of use from offices to 98 one bed dwellings. The properties would be situated over eight floors, and there would also be parking.

West Bromwich Building Society - now officially known as the West Brom - moved in to the site in 1978.

It relocated less than a mile away to new headquarters on Providence Place last year.

## Fewer complaints against police force

THE number of complaints logged against West Midlands Police fell by nearly a quarter in 12 months, new figures reveal.

Statistics released by the Independent Police Complaints Commission show there were 882 complaints received in 2016/17, down 24 per cent from 1,168 during the previous financial year.

# High-speed death crash driver is given 10-year jail sentence

## Police in new bid to recover firearms



Deadly arsenal - some of the guns that were surrendered during the previous amnesty held in 2014

A FIREARMS 'surrender' scheme means guns can be handed over to the police in the Black Country without fear of prosecution.

Shotguns, rifles, BB guns, imitation firearms, ammunition and antique firearms can all be surrendered at police stations across the region throughout September. West Midlands Police can also arrange for officers to make home collections. The weapons will either be destroyed or retained for

training exercises. It is hoped the move will stop weapons, even fakes, from potentially falling into the hands of criminals.

Detective Chief Inspector Rich Agar said: "There will be people in the West Midlands who, out of misguided loyalty, are storing guns for partners, relatives or friends. They are risking life behind bars, even if they have no intention of using the gun themselves. They need to contact us."

"The problem of antique weapons is another emerging threat. There could potentially be thousands of Second World War guns unaccounted for. Criminals can reactivate these guns and an 'underground' armorer provide bespoke ammunition, so please hand these in and don't risk them falling into criminal hands."

Stations where firearms can be surrendered include Brierley Hill, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton.

A PERSONAL trainer who sped along the busy Wolverhampton Road at 'motorway speeds' has been jailed for 10 years for causing the death of an elderly man.

Kamran Raja was driving the four-litre Audi Quattro S4 at 79mph on the 40mph stretch of the A4123 in Warley on April 2 last year.

The Audi, which had its roof down, smashed into a Honda Jazz being driven by 85-year-old Edward Harris, who was travelling home from church. He had been to church and had dropped his daughter off minutes earlier, giving her a final kiss goodbye.

Both cars were lifted off the road and the Honda was propelled nearly 100ft from where the crash took place at the junction with Castle Road East.

The great-grandfather, who lived nearby, was able to walk from his car but died the next day at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham after suffering multiple organ failure.

### Disqualified

Raja, aged 37, of Gospel Farm Road, Acocks Green, had denied causing death by dangerous driving and had been standing trial at Wolverhampton Crown Court before changing his plea.

He was sentenced to 10 years in prison and disqualified from driving for five years following his release.

The court heard the father-of-four, who worked at three gyms in Birmingham, had a long record of previous driving offences for which he had spent some time behind bars, including having lied to police about his identity.

Prosecutor, Mr Antonie Muller, added: "This was motorway speeds on a residential road."

In defence, Mr Graeme Simpson said his client had been 'devastated' by what he did.

## College in top 10 for satisfaction

HALESOWEN College has been placed in the top 10 per cent of providers nationally, a survey has revealed.

Results from the 2017 National Students Survey (NSS) found 96 per cent of students were satisfied overall with their course - compared to a national average of 84 per cent. The result means the college is placed in the top 10 per cent of providers.

A college spokesman said: "The college has established highly valued partnerships with local employers, organisations and partner higher education institutes. A very high proportion of students continuing with their studies and progressing to employment or highly skilled employment or further study."

The NSS is an annual survey of final-year undergraduates studying for higher education qualifications at higher education institutions. More than 300,000 students took part.

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**IN MY VIEW**  
with Mark Andrews



# Buses that will drive you round the bend

A BLANKET 20mph speed limit in Dudley town centre is one of the more eye-catching plans in the exciting new transport plan for the West Midlands Combined Authority.

Personally, I don't think this goes anywhere near enough. What we really need is a man in a top hat walking in front of every car while carrying a red flag.

□ □ □

THE other two priorities in the transport plan seem to be bendy buses and an extension to the Midland Metro tram link.

Bendy buses were tried in London some years ago, and scrapped in favour of traditional double-decker buses. Complaints included that they were unsuited to the narrow streets and tight bends of urban areas, and also that they could be a danger, particularly to cyclists.

Trams are great for getting from one part of a large city to another, you only have to look at their success in places like Amsterdam or Berlin, and I'm sure that a similar, comprehensive tram network would be equally as successful in, say, Birmingham, although it would be very expensive to implement.

But as a way of travelling between towns and cities? Waste of time, far too slow. After all, why would you spend 45 minutes on the Midland Metro from Wolverhampton to Birmingham, when you can get there on the train in a third of that time?

□ □ □

As a rule, I'm all for tougher discipline in schools, but I can't help but think that Barry Smith, the new headmaster of Yar-mouth High School which is said to be one of the worst schools in the country, has bitten off more than he can chew.

He has made headlines with strict new rules insisting that pupils must be in bed by 9.30pm every day, and up at 6.30am. Good luck telling teenagers that.

And how exactly is he going to enforce it? Are he and his staff going to visit every pupil's house – some of them as old as 16 – to check they are going to bed and getting up at the right time? If so, hats off to him for his dedication.

One can't help but suspect, though, that it is just an idle threat that it will make no difference whatsoever to the youngsters' sleeping habits.

And it was my understanding that one of the first things they tell you at teacher training college is your authority is undermined forever the moment you make a threat you are not prepared to carry out.

Sir – must do better.

## Nothing to do with central heating, it's all those cakes



**Prue Leith, the Bake Off judge, puts blame on sedentary lifestyle**



**Boris Johnson – nothing cocks-up a planned relief mission quite like a VIP visit**



**Tim Vine – great one-liner as he interviewed a retired farmer for his chat show**

# Obesity? No Prue-f is in the pudding

PRUE Leith, the Bake Off judge, pins the blame on our "centrally-heated houses and sedentary lifestyle" for contributing to obesity. Nothing to do with all those cakes, then?

If you're hungry, thirsty, cold and wet and living in terror of looters in some storm-ravaged outpost of Empire in the Caribbean, what is absolutely the last thing you need? Dead right – Boris Johnson. And although the British troops accompanying the Foreign Secretary smile dutifully for the cameras, if you speak privately to any soldier or officer, they'll tell you that nothing cocks-up a carefully-planned relief mission quite like a VIP visit. The Morse code message from the Caribbean was not so much SOS as BOB. I bet you can decode that.

DEVON & Cornwall Police are discussing a merger with Dorset Police. This will reduce the number of forces in England and Wales to 42. That's right, 42. We have one Parliament, one law and one court system, but 42 constabularies. All have their own little empires and chief constables, deputy chief constables, commissioners and their deputies. It is madness. The sooner we have a national police force, the better.

AND if you want proof, look no further than the disgraceful "lockdown" in Cromer last month when a gang of travellers brought terror to the seaside town. By common consent Norfolk Police were rubbish. And what makes their performance even worse is that they were warned, by Suffolk Police, that the travellers were on their way. One constabulary was glad to get the troublemakers off its patch, another constabulary was unprepared to deal with them. Fragmented policing betrays the people.

## THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



WELCOME back, Upstart Crow (BBC2) starring David Mitchell as the young William Shakespeare in a period sitcom stuffed with great gags and sub-GCSE literary references. In contrast, Mitchell's wife, Victoria Coren Mitchell, presents the eye-wateringly difficult quiz show Only Connect, also on BBC2. I cannot think of another showbiz marriage where the husband's TV series makes you feel clever and the wife's makes you feel stupid. They must have an interesting relationship.

A FEW days ago it was reported that Barclays were issuing cheque books with a message urging customers to switch to hi-tech online banking: "It's a high-tech world, so why use a low-tech cheque?" The very next day brought the headlines: "Up to 44 million Britons may have had their data stolen in massive cyber attack." See the connection? Some of us low-tech neanderthals would rather keep our sovereigns under the bed than create any electronic link between our hard-earned money and the global den of thieves that is the internet.

SHORTHAND experts are being invited to study notes made by the great polar explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton. Good luck with that. Shackleton's notes are 114 years old and, as any hack will confirm, shorthand starts to decay after a couple of days.

I LOVED Tim Vine's one-liner as he inter-

viewed a retired farmer for his Chat Show (Radio 4) So the farm, was it arable or did you quite like it?

THE expression "as thick as thieves" describes the tendency of dishonest people to mix with their own sort. It's a confusing expression because so many thieves are, well, simply thick. Take the morons who stole a narrow boat from its mooring near Napton in rural Warwickshire. A 50ft steel boat with a diesel engine is hardly the ideal getaway vehicle. It goes pudda-pudda rather noisily, hits 4mph if you're lucky and there is no chance of turning around, branching off or flopping it to someone. Having nicked a narrow-boat you are locked into the waterway network and there is no escape, especially when, as in this case, the owner sets up a Facebook alert. Sure enough, the vessel was found a couple of miles down the cut where police found "signs of cannabis use" and took fingerprints and DNA samples.

DNA is like diamonds. It's forever. The dope-smoking dopes know if they are ever arrested for anything at any time in the future and DNA tested, they will be charged with the boat theft. It's a sort of life sentence on the hopelessly thick, and serve 'em right.

A GUARDIAN columnist who was a great fan of the Greenham Common peace camp of the 1980s writes a piece headlined: "Why anti-nuclear protests need an urgent revival." Not all her readers are convinced. As one puts it, tongue firmly in cheek: "If there is one thing that will stop North Korea it is a load of women in monkey boots eating lentils in a field."

## TALKING POINT



# Don't let ref pay the penalty for being gay

THE name of Ryan Atkin would not mean a lot to those who follow football. He's probably known even less outside the game.

However, he has made what could prove to be a monumental decision. He's a referee. And he's also admitted he is gay. Atkin coming out has reopened the debate about homophobia surrounding what is known as the beautiful game – and sport in general.

Of course, his sexuality, like anyone else's, should not really be a matter of concern to other people. But, in an era, and industry, where being openly gay is still rare, more has to be made of his admission. In such a male-orientated environment, it's certainly a bold statement to make.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the beginning of decriminalisation of homosexuality in England and Wales, yet people in all walks of life are still afraid to come out for fear of abuse. It's hard to believe that such attitudes exist in the 21st century.

Sportsmen coming out have been few and far between. Athlete Colin Jackson and rugby player Gareth Thomas, former Villa player Thomas Hitzlsperger, US soccer player Robbie Rogers and diver Tom Daley are among the notable exceptions, but few, if any, come out while still at the height of their career.

I am sure that for the above sportsmen, their announcements would have lifted a weight off their shoulders, and at the same time earning them more respect and a host of new supporters.

For campaigners, Atkin's admission is a starting point in getting others to open up and be accepted. But there is still a long way to go.

Ryan Mather is the founder of Huddersfield Town's LGBT+ group and believes it is a positive step forward as fans look for a role model.

Atkin himself will be taking charge of games in the National League North and South divisions this season, but can also operate at up to Championship level as a fourth official. This, to a certain extent, would take him out of the firing line for abuse. Referees suffer enough of this as it is, so to be a referee and gay really does take some bottle. It's an admirable decision. Campaigners feel it could lead to others, even Premiership officials, to open up and they hope Atkin could be a champion of their cause.

My own view is that Atkin, by coming out, is taking a stand against the prejudiced bullies. And he's more of a man than the abusers will ever be.

MARK SHIPP

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# Police inaction is sad reflection of times

I am very surprised to read in the Chronicle that Brierley Hill police are not investigating the damage inflicted on the grave of Victoria Cross recipient Anthony Clarke Booth because they believe that this "could have been accidental and that the grave and headstone may have been struck by a lawnmower".

Having examined the headstone and surround myself, I feel that this is highly unlikely. The headstone is large and extremely heavy (the combined

strength of three of us were unable to lift it even slightly).

Had it been struck by a mower this would have had to have been with considerable force, and the stone would most certainly show the markings of being hit, if not being broken. This is not the case.

The grass in the churchyard is cut monthly by Dudley Council and the council therefore should be able to identify the employee and establish whether the damage was accidental.

The police, it would appear, are treating the incident lightly and do not seem especially bothered about investigating it, which in view of the significance of the grave and the person in whose memory it was constructed, is a very sad reflection of the current times.

**BRIAN BUCK**

Deputy Churchwarden  
St Michael's Parish Church  
Brierley Hill

## If only we could use all of that Tory hot air

I certainly agree with Ian Austin, in his article about the fact that a postcode lottery exists in this country with regards to over 60s bus passes.

Don't hold your breath with regards to the new West Midlands Mayor changing the discriminatory policy because he is on a Tory agenda, no doubt.

The only way is to rid us of the Tories, and that will never happen because the electorate have been brainwashed by the hot air that they regularly spout.

So far they have destroyed the police, NHS, local community services, library services, the list is endless.

Perhaps we could have a new environmental service, called Canned Hot Air, to save the planet, with all the Conservative MPs contributing on a daily basis, free-post of course, to help this year's freezing pensioners.

**MR C LLOYD**  
Dudley

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### POST

Dudley Chronicle,  
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Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

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## Cheer the Velo riders

THE Velo Birmingham Sportive which will take place on local roads this Sunday has attracted a fair amount of comment, some of which is not very supportive. Whilst many people are understandably concerned by road closures I think there will be many positive benefits from the event.

15,000 people, male and female, of all ages, will have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to cycle through the wonderful countryside of South Staffordshire and Worcestershire in complete safety. A great deal of money will be raised for the Alzheimer's Society, Cureleukaemia, the NSPCC and the Queen Elizabeth (hospital), all very worthy causes which should be supported whether you happen to live in Wombourne, Kinver or anywhere else.

By providing a welcoming and positive attitude local businesses can choose to embrace the event and make money. The West Midlands can demonstrate the region is capable of putting on great events, such as the 2022 Commonwealth Games. I hope many will be inspired to take up cycling. Rather than being grumpy it would be superb to see local people giving the riders a cheer and friendly wave.

**DAVID VINER**  
Stourbridge

## Powell was a politician of principle

RE: Ian Austin's view that Enoch Powell was a racist

Mr Powell was a very educated man, a war veteran who reached the rank of brigadier and was a fine MP. His views, although delivered in robust terms, were agreed with by a large proportion of the West Midlands and the country as a whole.

London dock workers marched in support of Mr Powell; this was the level of support he commanded.

Even today if Mr Austin took the trouble to walk around his Dudley area and ask people what they think of Mr Powell I am sure he would get an overwhelming positive response.

Now, more than 50 years later, Mr Powell is still revered in this area. I wonder if Mr Austin will be?

Unfortunately today if you speak about immigration you are automatically called a racist.

Mr Powell was a politician of principle and a credit to his country.  
**J BARNES**  
Dudley

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From left Nikul Lal, Ajay Sameer and Vik Lal from Wolverhampton



From left Matthew Scott, Emily James, Rebecca Nicholas, James Nicholas



Joseph Rowley and Lucy Heritage



Hundreds turned out for the event at the Tipton Road museum

# Peaky Blinders take over museum

Flat caps and waistcoats were the dress code as the Black Country Living Museum was taken over by gangsters and their molls during its Peaky Blinders weekend.

The museum paid homage to the hit BBC TV series, which is partly filmed at the Tipton Road site, as hundreds turned out to sample the underworld lifestyle of 1920s Brum.

The site was altered to become a dark and menacing scene, with props from the show also featuring. Police officers armed with truncheons were running around after the bad guys as visitors watched a re-enactment of scenes from the critically-acclaimed show.

Fans were also allowed to stroll around the set and take a peek inside

Shelby's scrap metal yard, where illegal goods are moved along the Black Country canal network.

A statement on the museum's Facebook page said: "Thousands of Peaky Blinders fans descended on the museum to dance and laugh the night away. Cheers to our visitors - you all looked a million dollars."

The event remained as popular as

ever with tickets for both Friday and Saturday night selling out.

## Family

Peaky Blinders stars actor Cillian Murphy as Birmingham gangster Tommy Shelby alongside such stars as Tom Hardy, Helen McCrory and Staffordshire-born Paddy Considine. The show has filmed at the Black

Country Living Museum during every one of its seasons.

The Shelseys and co will return to TV screens for Peaky Blinders' fourth season next month, when fans will find out how Tommy will make good on his promise to protect his family following the dramatic denouement of season three.

## New ratings on piercing and tattoo hygiene

A NEW hygiene ratings scheme to keep people informed when getting tattoos and piercings has been launched.

Dudley Council has unveiled the new scheme which allows people to check the hygiene ratings of businesses before they get their tattoos or piercings.

The programme, similar to the food hygiene ratings system which has been running for a number of years, aims to raise hygiene standards in the borough and help ensure members of the public are in the loop when deciding which studio business to use.

It also includes businesses that offer semi-permanent make-up. The scheme is voluntary and businesses have to apply to be part of the ratings system.

Councillor Peter Miller, cabinet member for health and wellbeing, said: "Often people go for the places that offer the cheapest deals or the best artwork.

"Hygiene is such a massive issue and should be part of that decision-making when choosing somewhere to get a tattoo or piercing."

People will be able to see the scores of all businesses by visiting [dudley.gov.uk](http://dudley.gov.uk) and searching for tattoos and piercings.

## Overgrown churchyard gets tidied up at last

AN overgrown churchyard in Lye has finally been cut back.

A total of 20 closed churchyards - including Christ Church in Lye - are now cut just twice a year instead of seven in a bid to save the council £15,000 a year. Councillor Susan Ridney said: "These are our public spaces and we should look after them. It appears that the Christ Church has been cut because the council did say they would look to do it in September."

Last year Dudley Council approved a budget cut to reduce the strimming regime.



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# Police issue warning after jihadi convicted

**ANTI-TERRORISM** police have warned of the danger posed by British jihadis returning from warzones in Syria and Iraq.

Chief Superintendent Matt Ward, head of West Midlands Counter Terrorism Unit, also urged relatives to report family members who were showing signs of radicalisation or had hinted of joining terrorist groups.

It comes after Ismael Watson, 27, became the eighth person from Walsall to be convicted of ISIS-related terrorism offences at the Old Bailey.

Ch Supt Ward said: "Anyone intending to travel to Syria or Iraq to fight or to commit terrorist acts against the UK or our interests should be in no doubt that the police will take the strongest possible action against them. Everyone who returns from taking part in the conflict in Syria or Iraq must expect to be reviewed by the police to determine if they have committed criminal offences and to ensure that they do not pose a threat to our national security."

"If anyone is concerned that a friend or family member is thinking of travelling to Syria it is very important that they tell us as soon as possible."

Contact police on 101 or visit [www.preventtragedies.co.uk](http://www.preventtragedies.co.uk) for relevant support and advice. Report suspicious activity on 0800 789 321 or visit [www.gov.uk/ACT](http://www.gov.uk/ACT)

Watson attempted to travel to Syria last year but was thwarted by undercover MI5 officers. He had become radicalised by watching ISIS videos at home. He complained his wife had 'snitched' after she became concerned of his extremist views.

Jurors took just 45 minutes to convict Watson after he failed to offer any defence. He will be sentenced at a later date.

## Charity ball to fight disease



**Leanne Lillywhite-Sutton and John Thompson have organised a Black & White Charity Ball to raise money for the charity LAM Action**

A MOTHER is hosting a ball to raise money to support people with an incurable lung disease.

Leanne Lillywhite-Sutton, aged 34, is one of around 250 people in the UK who are believed to have lymphangioleiomyomatosis, which destroys lung tissue and leads to severe breathing problems and appears almost exclusively in women of childbearing age. The exact cause is not known.

Leanne, originally from Aldridge,

but living in Stourbridge with her husband James and two-year-old daughter Isemay, has teamed up with a former colleague, John Thompson, to put together a Black and White Charity Ball to raise money for LAM Action which supports women with the disease.

It takes place at the Holiday Inn at Birmingham Airport on Saturday September 30 at the tickets can be purchased at [lamaction.org/black-and-white-ball](http://lamaction.org/black-and-white-ball)

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2016 winner - paralympian Jordanne Whiley MBE

## Categories to nominate people for

THE 10 categories in the Black Country Sport and Physical Activity Awards are:

**1 Coach of the Year:** This award recognises the achievements of a paid or unpaid coach who has made a significant impact on those they have coached.

**2 Community Club of the Year:** This award recognises a community sports club that provides a high quality sports environment achieved through supporting coaches and volunteers.

**3 Community Impact Award:** This award recognises a sport and/or physical activity project which uses innovative approaches to improve the lives of Black Country people not usually active.

**4 Sports Personality of the Year:** This category is for sports people who have displayed excellence in their chosen sport, ie county champions, national and international athletes. Must be 19 or older.

**5 Aspiring Athlete of the Year:** This award recognises a young person (including disability athletes/players) who has progressed and excelled in his/her sport and is a positive role model to others.

**6 The Power of Sport Award:** This award recognises an individual whose life has significantly improved through being more active. In the past 18 months, the individual will be have made improvements to their life as a direct result of it.

**7 Unsung Hero:** This award recognises those who give up their time for free making participating in sport and physical activity possible for the community.

**8 Sportivate Project of the Decade:** This category has been developed to enable Sportivate deliverers from over the years to submit a nomination for their project.

**9 Satellite Club of the Year:** This award recognises a satellite club that has excelled over the past 12 months.

**10 School of the Year:** This award recognises schools that have used physical education or physical activity or sport as part of their school targets.

For full details go to [www.activeblackcountry.co.uk/events/black-country-sport-physical-activity-awards-2017](http://www.activeblackcountry.co.uk/events/black-country-sport-physical-activity-awards-2017)

# Search for unsung heroes

**THE search has begun for the sportsmen and women and the unsung heroes in the Black Country that go the extra mile.**

Voting has opened on the annual prestigious awards which honours the Black Country's brightest sports stars. Members of the public are being urged to put forward their nominations ahead of the Black Country Sport and Physical

Activity Awards. A total of 10 categories are included in this year's awards, two more than last year, with the winners to be announced at a ceremony on November 10 at the Copthorne Hotel in Dudley.

The awards are organised by Active Black Country, which is the sporting arm of the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership.

The awards cover a wide range of aspects in the sporting world, from focusing on individual athletes and

coaches to sports clubs and schools or shining stars to behind-the-scenes volunteers.

The main aim is to ensure people from the Black Country who have contributed a lot to sport be given their well-deserved moment in the spotlight.

Previous winners have included Olympic gymnast Kristian Thomas, tennis player Jordanne Whiley and fundraisers Suzy Evans and son Owen Richards.

A spokesman for the event said: "Active Black Country is urging people to put forward their local sporting heroes, especially those whose lives have been improved through the power of physical activity and sport."

"There are thousands of people across the Black Country doing fantastic things to inspire people to lead healthy, fun and active lives, from netball to boccia, football to zumba."

"Active Black Country want to recognise those individuals and organisations, whether they are coaching future talent, reaching out to less advantaged people, or achieving sporting success of their own. But we need you to nominate them."

The deadline for the nominations is midnight on October 3. Visit [www.activeblackcountry.co.uk/events/black-country-sport-physical-activity-awards-2017/](http://www.activeblackcountry.co.uk/events/black-country-sport-physical-activity-awards-2017/)



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Just chilling – Charlie settles in

BRITAIN is a nation of animal lovers – we do just adore our pets.

Most of our homes have a pet of some shape and size whether it be a dog, cat, rabbit, budgie, hamster. In fact, it is said that British households in total host 6.6 millions dogs and 7.7 million cats.

And we love taking pictures of our beloved pets, that valued extra family member and often man's – and woman's – best friend. So how would you like to win a little extra cash to spend on your pet – or yourself?

To have a chance of winning a £100 cash prize all you have to do is send in one of your favourite snapshots of the family pet.

It can be any animal from a dog, to a horse or even a spider as long as it is a pet belonging to you or a member of your family.

You may be a dog lover such as Mark Doggett, from Wolverhampton,



who snapped this stunning image of his dog when he took time out and they went paddle boarding in the evening sunshine.

Or are you more of a cat lover? They do so like to chill as in this picture of Charlie relaxing.

Our Chronicle judges are simply looking for interesting pictures. The images could be quirky, they could be arty, they could be cute or atmospheric.

We will select 10 of our favourite pictures and then it is up to our readers to decide which picture deserves

the cash prize. Group Editor of Weekly Titles Diane Davies said: "Don't we all love to see pictures of animals? It doesn't matter whether they are funny pictures, cute and cuddly or just fantastic photography, we want to see your pictures."

"It is a treat for the editorial team and the readers to see some of your pets – and even better if you can win a bit of cash too."

"Make us smile or even laugh with a snapshot or just impress us with your photographic prowess, we don't mind. We just want to see your pictures."

Anyone who would like to be in with a chance of winning some cash and to show off their pets and pictures should email the images to sue.attwater@expressandstar.co.uk

Please let us have your name and details and a little bit of information about your pet. So get snapping, because pets can win prizes!



## COMPETITION

## Time to take the stress out of Christmas

CHRISTMAS is around the corner! More to see, try, touch, taste, enjoy and buy at The Festive Gift Fair Christmas means gifts for your loved ones, decorations, excitement on children's faces, party games, movies by the fire and a table fit for a festive feast.

All can be found when the festive fair returns to Birmingham's NEC, November 16-17, with loads of new stalls. And the Chronicles have 35 pairs of tickets up for grabs.

Often the most time-consuming part is finding clever presents but there's no need to be stuck for ideas. There will be 350 stalls overflowing with thousands of ideas.

There are presents for all ages – from babies to teenagers, and parents to grandparents. When your bags are full, you can drop them off at the Present crèche and continue to shop, or stop for a bite to eat in one of the four catering/entertainment areas, where you can enjoy watching a great line-up of

live musical acts. You'll find a whole array of delicious artisan food and drink that you can sample, before you buy.

Christmas is magic for the young ones and at the fair you'll find loads of clever stocking fillers, toys and games to keep tots and schoolchildren amused for hours!

Buying presents for chaps can sometimes be a challenge but at the fair you'll find lots of choice, and things to pamper your mum, grandma, sister, best friend, wife or girlfriend.

If you love a bit of glitz and glam, Prima Makeup's glitter cosmetic range will be a hit. And there is a one-stop shop for sewing and knitting gifts at The Sunflower Shop.

Go mad with the decorations. Dress your tree, table, hall, mantelpiece with twinkling fairy lights, flickering candles and loads of greenery.

And Santa will be there too, along with a band of Christmas characters.



### HOW TO ENTER

To be in with a chance of winning a pair of tickets just answer the following question

**Where can you leave your bags while you shop?**

Send your answer on a postcard with your name, address and phone number to Festive Competition, Chronicle editorial, 51-53 Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES. Closing date: Thursday, September 28. Usual rules apply



# Driver knocked rider off motorbike and fled

A DRIVER from Dudley who knocked a motorcyclist off his bike before fleeing the scene and then crashing has been handed a suspended prison sentence and driving ban.

Yaser Karim, of Bunns Lane, appeared to be racing with another vehicle while travelling on the A442 Queensway in Telford in June last year, Telford Magistrates Court heard.

Mr Chris Coughlan, prosecuting, said the motorcyclist was knocked unconscious but 25-year-old Karim accelerated away in a Renault Clio, leaving the rider in the road.

Mr Coughlan said: "This is a truly shocking piece of driving. He appeared to be racing with another vehicle."

He said Karim then lost control of his vehicle and crashed through a fence further down the road.

Karim initially denied driving a vehicle without due care and attention but pleaded guilty on the day of his trial. He also admitted an offence of failing to stop.

Mr Gerry Vahey, representing Karim, said his client, who denied racing any other vehicle, had co-operated with the police. Magistrates handed Karim a 23-week prison sentence, suspended for 12 months. He was ordered to do 120 hours unpaid work and was disqualified from driving for 12 months. He will also have to pay £200 costs and £115 victim surcharge.

# Looking to protect more green spaces



**The view from Portway Hill in Rowley Regis**

SEVEN green areas across a Black Country borough likely to be added to a list of nature conservation sites.

Council bosses in Sandwell were to discuss the recommendation to designate seven areas as Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINCs) at a cabinet meeting yesterday (Wednesday). It will include Bullers Open Space, Tipton; Market Place, Tipton; Merry Hill; Smethwick; River Tame Corridor, Oldbury; Whitecrest, Great Barr; Woden Road East, Wednesbury, and Portway Hill, Rowley Regis.

The designations provide up-to-date evidence for planners to protect local nature when making planning decisions.

Councillor Paul Moore, Sandwell Council's cabinet member for regeneration and economic investment, said: "Our green spaces make Sandwell a more attractive place for people to live, work, play and invest."

"They can also encourage people to improve their physical and mental health and attract new housing to places where people want to live."

# Man, 51, jailed after sexually abusing boys

THE director of a theatre company who sexually abused two teenagers has started an eight year jail sentence. Bachelor Ian Jones, aged 51, repeatedly had sex with one boy and paid for naked pictures of the other.

Wolverhampton Crown Court heard one of the victims had known Jones since he was under the age of 10 and was a young teenager when the abuse started. It continued for four years, during which time Jones threatened to drop him from the company unless he continued to have sex every two or three weeks. At least one of the sex sessions was videoed by Jones. The defendant paid £60 for the other youth to send him two naked pictures.

Jones from Central Drive, Lower Gornal, had insisted he was not guilty before changing his plea just weeks before he was due to stand trial. He admitted charges including inciting a child to become involved in pornography, attempting to engage in sexual activity and sexual assault.

# West Midlands economy is outperforming rest of UK

**THE West Midlands economy is outperforming the rest of the UK due to the strength of its manufacturing output, according to a new report.**

The Midlands Economic Forum regional monitor for August showed that firms in the West Midlands saw business activity increase at a quicker pace than any other region in the UK.

In the monthly report it is noted that business confidence is under pressure from 'Brexit-related uncertainty', although it is said to be 'stronger in the Midlands due to robust manufacturing output'.

The latest West Midlands Business Activity PMI rose to 58.6 in August from 56.7 in July, putting the region at the top of the pile. The UK figure was 54.

Professor Julian Beer, deputy vice-chancellor at Birmingham City University, said: "Once again, the Midlands is showing strong performance compared to, and in some cases in contrast to, the rest of the UK."

"This strong performance of the region is despite regional infrastructure being at or near capacity in many cases, and skills shortages in some key regional industries."

# Comic Rob makes a rapid return to venue

WELSH comedian Rob Brydon is bringing his solo stand-up show to Birmingham twice this year due to public demand.

The funnyman best known for Gavin and Stacey, The Trip and as host of panel show Would I Lie To You? has almost sold out his show at Symphony Hall on Thursday, September 28.

Due to demand he will be back with his I Am Standing Up show at the Symphony Hall on Sunday, November 5.

Tickets for the show are now on sale, priced between £30.50 and £33. For further details visit thsh.co.uk or call 0121 780 3333.

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# No 'knee-jerk' reaction by council over sprinklers at flats

**FURTHER research on the benefit of sprinklers in high-rise flats is needed before money is spent on installing them, according to council bosses.**

A senior Dudley councillor said the authority should be wary of making a 'knee-jerk reaction' over sprinklers, following the Grenfell Tower disaster in London in which at least 80 people died.

Council chiefs have discussed what has been done in the wake of the horrific tower block blaze to reassure residents and maintain their safety.

The latest cabinet meeting included a full review into each of the tower blocks in the borough and testing whether they had any of the aluminium composite cladding which is believed to have helped the Grenfell fire to spread so quickly and with such devastating effect. No blocks in Dudley were found to have this sort of cladding or to be unsafe.

## Tragic

## Pedestrian is badly injured

A PEDESTRIAN was seriously hurt in a road accident involving a 4x4 in Birmingham on Monday night.

The smash happened on Brays Road in the Sheldon area of the city at just before 10.15pm.

An ambulance, a paramedic officer, a trauma doctor, a critical care paramedic and the West Midlands CARE Team were sent to the scene.

The 26-year-old pedestrian suffered 'multiple injuries' and was taken to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham.

Ambulance Service spokesman Murray MacGregor said: "The man, who was semi-conscious, was assessed and treated at the scene. He was taken to the major trauma centre at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital."

Councillor Les Jones, Conservative councillor for Pedmore and Stourbridge East ward, told the meeting: "We all know about the tragic event that took place at Grenfell Tower and the immediate steps we were asked to take to look at our own blocks in the borough."

"We did that because we wanted to make sure people living in those buildings were safe. We believe we are taking every precaution we can for those residents. But we must not be forced into a knee-jerk reaction of spending millions on things that are not necessarily helpful. Sprinklers, for example. The fire service is not always for them as they can prove to be a hazard to officers looking to gain access and once inside."

But Councillor Judy Foster, Labour councillor for Brockmoor and Pensnett ward said: "I disagree. The fire service say that they do support the use of sprinklers but that in certain buildings and scenarios, these are not always appropriate."

## School's success at the double



From left, head Terry Jones, Councillor Simon Hackett, and former pupil Sylvia Allen

A SCHOOL in Oldbury is enjoying a double celebration.

Perryfields Primary has undergone a major £2.6 million refurbishment and expansion at the same times it celebrates its 60th year.

The Apsley Road school will double its capacity in the coming years to 420 pupils. The project was finished to coincide with the school's diamond anniversary.

Head Terry Jones said: "We are delighted with the end result. We are happy with the extension and the refurbishment of the original building which really has made a huge difference. Despite the extension to the building and car park, we have actually increased the outdoor space for the children."

"I continue to be the very proud headteacher of a growing school that has maintained its friendly and welcoming ethos throughout."

The extension includes eight classrooms and group rooms, together with school offices, a staff room, a drama and dance studio, and technology room.

It was officially opened by Councillor Simon Hackett, Sandwell Council's cabinet member for children's services. He said: "Perryfields is a great example of where we've invested to create new primary school places to meet increasing demand."

One of the special guests was a former pupil from 1957, Sylvia Allen, of Stourbridge.

## Police witness appeal after man is shot

AN appeal has been launched after a shooting in the West Midlands.

A 24-year-old man was shot in the leg twice in Wheeler Street, Birmingham.

The attack happened just before 5pm on Monday after what is believed to be a verbal altercation with a group.

Police said they are keen to speak to anyone who heard any gunshots or saw any suspicious behaviour at the time.

Investigating officer Ian Leech from the Perry Barr CID team, said: "The road is quite busy near to the Nishkam School. It is likely there was passing traffic at the time from people travelling home from work."

The victim of the attack escaped with non serious injuries, but the detective said the attack was extremely serious.

The detective added: "Although the man was not found to have life threatening injuries after treatment at hospital, the danger this person was put in is inexcusable."

"We must find who is responsible. I would urge anyone who saw the people they believe to be involved to call me."

Anyone with information is asked to call police on 101, quoting 20BW/194237K/17 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

## More going vegan after fair success

THE organisers of a vegan group have expressed delight at its increase in membership as a result of its first Vegan Health & Lifestyle fair held at Stourbridge Town Hall.

Ben and Nicola Powell, of Black Country Vegans, said: "The membership has increased by well over 40 per cent, so that we now have more than 560 members."

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## ADVERTISEMENT

### GET SAVING ON ENERGY BILLS IN PREPARATION FOR WINTER WITH DUDLEY'S BIG SWITCH

With autumn soon taking its hold Dudley Borough residents are being encouraged to get saving on their energy bills before winter bites.

Dudley Council is urging people to sign up to its latest Big Switch energy switching scheme. The scheme offers residents market leading deals on energy which are not available elsewhere. Residents who have registered at previous auctions have saved up to £300 on their home energy bills, so it's well worth getting registered.

The Big Switch brings people together to reduce their energy bills by switching their energy suppliers collectively. The more people who register the better the deals on offer, as it is based upon the bulk buying concept.

The deals offered by the Big Switch are not available elsewhere, and it has been recently reported that up to sixty percent of top energy deals are not available on the standard switching sites. To get the best deal it is well worth registering.

In recent month's five of the 'Big six' energy providers have announced price hikes for people on standard variable rate tariffs, with British Gas announcing a 12.5 percent rise in its electricity prices. The majority of people are on standard variable tariffs (sixty-six percent according to Ofgem) and can potentially therefore make significant savings by signing up to switch.

Since the scheme began in June 2013 the collective savings made by borough residents has topped half a million pounds.

The latest Big Switch has launched this week. To take advantage of the cut price rates offered, people are encouraged to call 0300 555 2345 to register, or you can register online at [www.dudley.gov.uk/bigswitch](http://www.dudley.gov.uk/bigswitch). People will need to have their current tariff details and fuel usage (shown in the most recent bill) to hand.



The scheme is open to all householders, including people living in rented accommodation, those with a prepayment meter and people with a fuel debt of up to £500 or less.

Cllr Les Jones, cabinet member for housing, said:

"Our Big Switch energy auctions have proved extremely popular over the last few years with thousands signing up to take part and saving hundreds of pounds on their home energy bills. The deals offered through the scheme are market leading, so people will be getting real value for money. With winter on its way now is the ideal time to be registering to save, as well as keeping warm and well at home."

To find out more call Dudley Council Plus on 0300 555 2345 or visit [www.dudley.gov.uk/bigswitch](http://www.dudley.gov.uk/bigswitch).



# Save cash on your energy bills

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Register by 9 Oct 2017

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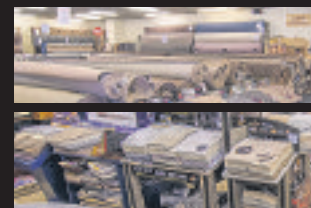
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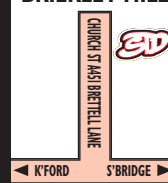
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## Bikers to help out stranded M5 drivers

RAPID assistance motor-cycles are being deployed to the M5 in the West Midlands as part of a drive to tackle crippling congestion.

The bikers will carry emergency fuel to combat breakdowns on the motorway through Oldbury, where motorists are already having to contend with major roadworks.

It is the first time in the UK fuel bikes have been used by Highways England while a major repair scheme is under way.

Since the August 1 this year, there have already been 17 fuel-related incidents recorded.

Highways England is working closely with Birmingham-based Egertons Recovery to manage the service.

Highways England project manager, Alastair Warnes, said: "Since the contraflow came into effect, we've already seen a number of fuel-related breakdowns in the roadworks section."

"In fact, on the very first day of the contraflow coming into effect, the first breakdown was caused by someone that had run out of fuel. This type of situation can cause delays. We're calling on motorists to do their bit and ensure they have plenty of fuel for the journey before setting off."

"We're always there to help motorists who need it."

# Child's play as Cozy Coupe king of road

THE iconic red and yellow Cozy Coupe has been driven by millions of children around the world – but none of them would have been quite like this one.

Foot-power has been replaced by an 800cc engine, giving it a top speed of more than 70mph.

And most excitingly of all the addition of an anti-lock braking system, registration plate and driver's airbag mean it is fully road legal.

Inevitably a car designed for little ones to drive around the garden or in the park does have its drawbacks on the open road.

The metal frame was not created with comfort in mind, there is not much room for luggage, and those inside have minimal protection from the elements.

## Cylinder

But these are small prices to pay for the chance to drive a one-of-a-kind vehicle which is guaranteed to draw attention as well as rekindle childhood memories.

It is currently on loan to West Bromwich-based Nankang Tyres who are using it as a promotional tool at car shows up and down the country.

Jamie Smith, who works in the firm's sales department, said: "Underneath it is a Daewoo Matiz with an 800cc, three-cylinder engine, but as you can see there has been a lot of metal work done and a bit with fibreglass."

"It handles a little like a cross between a go-kart and a Mini. Overall it handles and goes well."

The Cozy Coupe has recently been spotted out on the streets of the Black



**Jamie Smith of Nankang Tyres in the Cozy Coupe**

Country and Staffordshire including at a charity show in Rugeley.

Jamie added: "When you drive around the corner you can just see the shock on people's faces. Adults just point at it and smile while kids go absolutely crazy. A lot of adults remember it fondly as being their first car."

"Everyone recognises it as a Little Tikes Cozy Coupe but what really freaks people out is that it has a number plate and that I am driving and that it is actually road legal."

The car is owned by a company in the south of England which has come

to a mutually beneficial arrangement with Nankang Tyres. This sees the Cozy Coupe loaned by its owner to the Black Country firm whereas a Ford Mustang is handed the other way, also as a promotional tool.

Jamie added: "When we do the car shows or anything like that we have the Coupe on our stand and we display our tyres around it. We met the owner at a car show."

"They don't lend it out to anyone but we have built a really good relationship with them where we support each other for the car shows."

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# Antique that can create illusion of more space

ANTIQUES AND COLLECTIBLES

with John Ridgway of Perry & Phillips



**SOME vintage items are able to transform the look of a room all by themselves – and mirrors can do just that.**

A beautiful antique mirror provides a very attractive focal point whilst almost any strategically placed mirror reflects light and instantly creates the illusion of more space.

Mirrors have always been an interiors ‘essential’, for both personal and practical use, and have found their way into every home over hundreds of years.

They were in regular use in Georgian times and by the Victoria era all kinds of mirrors were being produced, from ‘swing mirrors’ for dressing tables to elegant free-standing models.

The Victorians – especially the ones living in rather grand houses – loved huge over-mantle mirrors (see Downton Abbey) and you can still pick these up at auction for reasonable prices.

Those made from wood, like mahogany, sometimes incorporated shelves below although the ornate ones with elaborate gilded frames were plainly designed for rather more decorative purposes.



Mirrors changed shape to literally mirror changing fashions and by the 1920s and 1930s they had become smaller, streamlined and extremely elegant.

Frames echoed the popular Art Deco and Art Nouveau styles and were very much sought after to grace the walls of fashionable homes.

By the 1940s mirror designs had changed again to become a little more functional in appearance, featuring hexagonal shapes and oval wooden frames,

and the 1950s versions were prettier, stylish to reflect the elegance of the decade.

The 1960s and 1970s witnessed a fashion revolution that of course extended to home furnishings and mirrors dating from these years can be anything from very plain to massively elaborate with intricate flowery frames.

When buying a vintage mirror check carefully for cracks and misting – although the very old mirrors are lovely even if they are misted, the reflections they provide are always more flattering!

- Perry and Phillips hold valuation days, for sale items only, every Wednesday from 10am until 4pm.
- The next Perry and Phillips sale of antiques and collectibles takes place at the Mill Street saleroom in Bridgnorth on Tuesday, October 3. Viewing will be during the weekend and on Monday and also from 10am on auction day.
- New sale bidders are advised to attends the sale-room early on auction day to register and be allocated a bidding number.
- Perry and Phillips hold sales on the first Tuesday of every other month.

# So much style and choice for the food we eat



Food as art – a tiered wedding cake

CELEBRITY chefs grace our television screens nightly showing us how to put foody delights together, new publications launched weekly with the next new diet, healthy eating plan, five-minute meals or super food specials.

I watch James Martin, Jamie Oliver, Nigel Slater, Nigella Lawson, Rick Stein, Masterchef and Bake Off.

My husband cooks each evening from Joe Wicks book “Lean in 15”.....yes, how lucky am I?

I love my food and am always fascinated by the delightful new flavours and complex tastes from the recipes that grace our tables. Our son has thankfully picked up the same baton and regularly enjoys experimenting on friends and family.

Most young people can cook and enjoy mixing different flavours.

They are subject to food from so many cultures and most ingredients are now available from the local supermarkets.

The choice of herbs, spices and unusual mixtures is incredible.

Children seem always to enjoy making a

## STYLE FOCUS

with Janet Timmis



mess while producing something that can be eaten, most of the time anyway!

I’m sure it makes for a less fussy eater in later years. It also seems that we go out to eat far more than our parents ever did, appreciating many more tastes.

Wedding cakes used to be a tiered simple white royal iced fruit cake decorated with inedible decorations and a floral topper.

### Masterpieces

Recently the masterpieces created represent the personality of the bride and groom, their hobbies or sporting acumen, tinted to harmonise with the wedding colours, an amazing piece of art built on a Victoria sponge or chocolate sandwich with bespoke toppers to complete or dramatic displays of personalised cup-cakes.

We can now buy edible glitter, cup-cake

toppers, cartoon characters in coloured icing, and even the display stands and boxes to show them off and if we are not that confident in the kitchen, we can also buy ready-made cake, biscuit, pastry or bread mixtures so there is no excuse not to delight friends and family with our baking.

Our kitchens sport the most up to date machinery to create the perfect mixtures, liquidisers, food processors, blenders, slicers and juicers, mechanics of the kitchen to make the job a little easier.

I am personally not a lover of cakes and biscuits, so our kitchen cupboards are devoid of the packets of sweet treats.

I rarely bake anything apart from an occasional apple pie or rhubarb crumble for Sunday pudding.

I do however have shelves full of cookery books so I am certain I have all the recipes to hand just in case!

Bon Appetit!

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Slow-cooked Asian lamb – one of the recipes from Kirstie’s book



Kirstie is on a mission to encourage more people to learn to cook at home

# Kirstie moves to a new location – in the kitchen



The book is available to buy in hardback

**TV presenter Kirstie Allsopp is best known as one half of the Location, Location, Location double act.**

But now her debut cookbook, Kirstie’s Real Kitchen, has just hit the shelves and she’s on a new mission, to inspire people who think they can’t cook to give it a try.

“It’s a book for people who are not that confident about themselves as a cook. There is a big ‘can-do’ part of my life, which I’ve only recently realised,” she says.

“The fun bit is doing things in a certain way that people then say, ‘You know, I didn’t think I could do this, and now I can’. And then you think, actually, this is really a job worth doing.”

Kirstie once knew very little about cooking herself

To write the book, Kirstie, 46, mined her experiences of learning to cook, from her days as a single 20-something, to becoming a mum and step-mum to four boys. Recipes are split into categories like Big Dishes, Children & Fussy Eaters and, of course, Christmas.

“Cooking didn’t play a huge part in my childhood,” she admits. “My mum was fascinated by people who were interested in

### Report by Kate Whiting

food. She used to say, ‘Oh my God! So and so sits in bed and reads recipe books!’ She was just amazed anyone would do that.

“I bought my first flat when I was 21 [in the early-Nineties] and mortgage rates were 14 per cent. Now there is a much bigger eating-out culture among young people, but it really didn’t exist back then. If you wanted to see your friends, you had to cook, and that is what I did. But it was a really steep learning curve... Old friends of mine will tell you there was a whole year of chicken tikka, because I’d learn to do one thing.”

### Experiment

She says she’s not “a risk-taker in the kitchen”, although she does experiment on her property developer partner Ben Andersen more now than she used to.

Kirstie has two sons with Ben – Oscar, nine, and Bay, 11 – as well as two older stepsons, Hal and Orion. She admits that her nanny Heather does “the majority of the cooking for the children in the school term” (“It’s probably another reason why I’m so keen to cook when I can,” she notes).

She thinks the challenge of cooking for fussy children is one of the reasons women give up trying.

“I remember a stage when, if I cooked for the children, I would be like, ‘Actually, I don’t want to do it any more, can we just have a sandwich or an omelette?’

“When you become confident in your food, you can do very quick things. So now, if given a fish, I am happy to get some peppers and tomatoes and bung them in, with a bit of marinade. It is not a stress.

“But if you’re going to teach yourself to cook, you have to teach your children to wash up. That’s a fair division of labour.

“If we don’t cook, how do we teach our children to wash up? There is a whole generation of children that have never had to get scrambled egg off a pan – it is not right!”

But now she loves being in the kitchen

Her happiest times in the kitchen now are Sunday mornings, when she’s making the roast and catching up on The Archers.

She’s also a big advocate of healthy eating but says she hasn’t focused on that in the book because, “if you’re trying to get people to start cooking, you can’t lecture them on diet at the same time.

“The absolute key is to encourage people to cook more,” states Kirstie. “Once you start cooking more, you realise what goes into food and you start being more careful about what you eat. I think it is very hard to have a healthy diet if you don’t cook.”



## Home extension plans made easier

PEOPLE in Dudley borough could benefit from a more 'streamlined' approach when seeking planning permission on extensions to their homes after council bosses approved a new system.

According to the new 'householder extensions local development order design guidance', people will no longer have to pay a substantial fee or go through lengthy planning application over an extension.

The aim is to make it easier for people to extend their properties but they must consult with their neighbours beforehand and adhere to building regulations.

Councillor David Spark has some concerns. He said: "No doubt everyone will accept and support the change but we need to be aware that ward councillors have to deal with a lot of the problems faced by residents when neighbours build unsightly or obstructive extensions without consideration."

"I understand that it will streamline the process, but we need to make it clear to people that there will be consequences and they will be liable for legal action if their extensions do not adhere to building regulations."

Regular planning permission routes will remain for larger developments.

The paper was approved by the council cabinet and will be amended before going to full council in the coming weeks.

## Chip shop ready to batter the opposition



Zach Ioannou, of Oldswinford Fish & Chips in Stourbridge, which is hoping to be crowned best chippy

A CHIPPY in the Black Country is getting ready to fry for glory after being listed as one of the top two chip shops in the Midlands' as part of a nationwide award.

It's a double celebration for Oldswinford Fish & Chips, on Hagley Road, which is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year too.

The shop was re-branded in 2012 when brothers Zach and John Ioannou took over running the family business. Now the chippy will go up against The Golden Carp, in Redditch, in the race to become the Midlands' best in the Fish and Chip Shop of the Year Award.

Organised by Seafish, the awards are known as the 'Oscars' of the fish and chip industry.

Zach explained: "To be voted best in our area and in the top 20 UK shops is a fantastic achievement – we won the entire Midlands last year. We are consistently producing great food."

## Gaga concert delay due to ill health

POP star Lady Gaga has postponed the European leg of her Joanne World Tour until next year due to ill health – including her Genting Arena concert that was scheduled for October 12.

A statement from promoters Livenation says: "Lady Gaga is suffering from severe physical pain that has impacted her ability to perform. She remains under the care of expert medical professionals who recommended the postponement. Lady Gaga is devastated that she has to wait to perform for her European fans. She plans to spend the next seven weeks proactively working with her doctors to heal from this and past traumas that still affect her daily life, and result in severe physical pain in her body. She wants to give her fans the best version of the show she built for them when the tour resumes."

Fans should hold onto their tickets pending the announcement of a new date.

# Mega-tip move at depot is binned by the council

**CONTROVERSIAL plans to transform a depot in Brierley Hill into the borough's main refuse tip have been scrapped.**

Dudley Council bosses have confirmed that the proposal to move waste operations to the Leys Depot has been thrown out.

However, they have not ruled out closing Stourbridge tip, a plan put forward by Labour when it was in control of the local authority.

The plan to move to Leys Road was tabled by the Labour group earlier this year, sparking a revolt from opposition councillors, but a change in leadership at the council in May threw the scheme up in the air.

Now Karen Shakespeare, environ-

mental boss, said Leys Depot had been ruled out. The plan was put forward in a bid to save money, as the Leys Depot is owned by the council and a move there would be cheaper than buying another site.

Councillor Shakespeare said a feasibility study had been ordered on alternative sites and it was her preference for there to be tips serving both the north and south of the borough.

## Footgolf extended to the full 18 holes

A FOOTGOLF course has been extended – allowing people to kick their way through 18 holes.

Valley Cycles and Leisure introduced a new nine-hole course at Sandwell Valley using the existing pitch and putt golf course in April last year.

Now the firm and Sandwell Council have worked together to increase the course from nine holes to a full 18-hole course.

The course is open between April and October – weather dependent – and is available every weekend, during school holidays and bank holidays.

Entry prices are £8 for adults, £6 for under 16s and over 60s, with ball hire at £1 per ball. For more information visit valleycycles.co.uk website.

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# Presenter has tips to get the best from herbs



**EX-TOMORROW'S** World presenter Judith Hann used to spend her time in a TV studio, but these days she's out in her garden, growing more than 150 culinary herbs including borage, sweet cicely and others which taste great but aren't widely available in supermarkets.

Judith, who runs Hann's Herbs, courses on how to grow and cook with herbs, says: "My favourite herbs are those which are virtually impossible to buy in this country, but are totally simple to grow, and once you've got them, you've got them forever."

In her latest book, *Herbs*, she offers advice on how to grow and cook with a huge range of herbs.

## HYSSOP

"Hyssop's very easy to grow. I grow it in a dry, sunny area along with thymes and different marjorams. Once the faded thyme flowers have been cut back, the hyssops will be coming into bloom. It's traditionally served with rabbit.

It has thin, spicy leaves with a hint of lemon, rosemary and mint. It can also be made into a syrup and served with fruits, such as peaches.

## SORREL

This is the one I most often use in my cooking. I grow three perennials - I've a 12ft run of broad-leaf sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*). I put the plants in over 20 years ago when I made the herb garden and the same plants are there. You just cut them back when the seed-heads form and you have them for almost 12 months a year. I pick sorrel most days for soups, sauces, salads, tarts and terrines.

Some leaves are very big so you can wrap fish in them, but we serve sorrel sauce with chicken or fish. It has a mild, lemony taste and the smaller leaves are great in a mixed salad.

## LOVAGE (pictured bottom right)

This is my favourite herb, with its spicy, celery taste. It's simple to grow. You can grow it from seed in spring in trays inside and covering with vermiculite, using a propagator to boost germination. It has quite long roots and likes a rich soil and sunshine or partial shade. Cut it back in summer when the leaves start to taste bitter and then go pale and lose their flavour.

## BORAGE (pictured above)

The blue flowers of young borage taste of sweet cucumber and are perfect in drinks such as Pimm's, or scattered on salads and summer fruits.

It's an annual which pops up in an unruly fashion all over the place because the birds take the seeds. The flowers appear in early summer and last until autumn and it self-seeds easily.

**Herbs by Judith Hann is published by Nourish, priced £20.**



Planting containers can help keep colour in your garden late in the year

# Keep your garden green through autumn months

WITH autumn upon us, it's time to think about what you can plant now that will give you greenery and colour in your garden throughout the cooler months.

It's also a great time to plant up a container, which can be put on the patio to brighten up the garden, or placed by the front door to welcome guests. Sarah Squire, deputy chairman at Squire's Garden Centres, advises: "The key things to remember are choose a container that you like the look of, add good quality compost, and above all, choose plants you love."

"Think about colour combinations - make sure you include some evergreen plants and then add either vibrant reds, oranges and yellows for an autumnal feel, or choose pinks, purples and whites for a softer, more romantic look."

## CHOOSE YOUR CONTAINER

A wooden barrel is an attractive choice but you could choose anything you like. Make sure the container has holes at the bottom for drainage.

## FILL WITH COMPOST

Squire's recommends Westland Multi Purpose

Compost With Added John Innes, which encourages stronger plant development and longer plant life.

## SELECT PLANTS TO EXTEND THE SEASON

A large skimmia, which is an evergreen shrub with clusters of attractive flowers and berries, makes a great focal point. Plant bulbs such as Narcissus 'Tete-a-Tete' miniature daffodils, irises and muscari to give an injection of colour early next year. Add other flowering plants, such as cyclamen, violas and pansies, or try an ornamental cabbage for additional foliage interest.

## POSITION CAREFULLY

Put the largest plant such as the skimmia in the middle of the container. Carefully place bulbs two to three times their depth and one bulb width apart, pointed end up. Then put smaller plants around the outside.

## WATER AND FEED

Water every few days if it hasn't rained, and use a feed such as Miracle-Gro all purpose continuous release plant food, which will encourage bigger, lusher plants.

# Shape your plants to make a most spectacular display

Report by Hannah Stephenson

**IF** you've visited stately homes and gardens this summer and admired the architectural beauty of evergreen spheres and cones, beautifully clipped mazes, evergreen peacocks and other statuesque shapes, you may be inspired to create your own topiary.

This art of training plants into intricate shapes and forms may seem an occupation for the extremely skilled and artistic gardener, but now, as many of us are trimming our hedges, it's worth considering a few simple tricks of the topiary trade.

You can create a whimsical shape from a plant which will be both eye-catching and a topic of conversation when spotted.

## START WITH SIMPLE SHAPES

Balls, pyramids, cones and obelisks are among the easiest shapes to start with, according to the RHS. Choose a young, well-proportioned plant such as box or yew, which can be tightly clipped for detailed work. They are slow-growing, so once their shape is established it should be fairly easy to maintain. You can also use holly, privet and the evergreen honeysuckle *Lonicera nitida*.

Wire frames are widely available to create the shape you want and flexible young shoots can be tied into the frame to create bushy growth. Sideshoots can be cut regularly back to two or three buds to encourage branching. When the plant is growing, make sure the ties aren't cutting into the stems. Stems facing downwards will grow the slowest and need to be tied in regularly, while vertical growth is the quickest.

## LARGER STATUES NEED OPEN SITES

Individual specimens can be grown in pots, but if you are after something bigger they will be more likely to succeed in an open sunny site, sheltered from strong winds.

As both box and yew are slow-growing, they only need trimming twice a year once their shape is established, in early summer and early autumn, using sheep shears or single-handed clippers.

If you are starting from scratch, choose a plant that already has the makings of a shape, such as a dome or spire, so all you have to do is exaggerate it.

Common ivy can easily be trained into formal shapes with, say, the help of sweet pea rings, to grow around metal hoops or arches against a wall. Dwarf conifers can also be used to make effective architectural shapes, while upright varieties are ideal for training into obelisks or spires. Common holly can be used to make into mushroom or sphere shapes.

## CREATE A LOLLIPOP

To make a standard box bush, when the plant is about 2ft high gradually shorten



You can be as ambitious as you like with your designs - here a woman is pruning a hedge into the shape of a bird



Topiary can be used in built up areas, such as outside this London town house



Shaped shrubs can make a real difference to your garden

the lower branches by half so a stem forms and shape the top into a rough ball shape. A year later, cut all branches from the stem. The lollipop top should be half the stem height and you can then trim it to shape.

As the plant matures, the branches and leaves should become tightly knitted to give a solid appearance. Apply an annual dressing of Growmore and mulch the soil with organic matter in spring.

## SHAPE A SPHERE

To make a topiary sphere, stand above the plant and clip a broad band around its

waist. Clip from the top middle point to the waist, then upwards from the bottom middle point to the waist. That will give you the outline for your sphere.

These sort of shapes look great in pairs outside front doors to make an impressive entrance, or add structure when put together on a patio.

If you want to make a pyramid or cone, tie three canes together into an extended triangle to use almost as a guideline for shape, tying any long shoots to the cane with twine to form the outer edges and

prune the plants to the pyramid template.

## USE FRAMES FOR COMPLEX SHAPES

With other shapes, place a wire "former" over the plant and only start clipping once the plant has grown through. Formers, unlike frames, can be removed once the outline of the shape has developed. Use frames of sturdy wire to help with more complex shapes such as spirals, cake stands, arches and animals.

Potted topiary needs watering thoroughly and regularly in summer and the roots need protection from frost in the winter.



# Lawn order fails to earn Keith his stripes



Keith Smith's lawn, cut into the shape of a Union flag design

**A GREEN keeper and groundsman has made quite an impression after mowing the design of the Union flag into his lawn.**

Keith Smith, of Great Barr, used two hand-push 1940s mowers set at different heights.

The part-time Aston Villa groundsman and Edgbaston Golf Club greenkeeper worked to create his ideal lawn in time for entry to the Allett International Creative Lawn Stripes Competition.

## Competition

The 40-year-old said: "It's good, it just gets your creative mind going."

"You do have to have attention to detail it's a creative competition, not just straight lines. It doesn't matter how long you have

been doing it as long as you can push your motor up and down. It's a whole lot of work to just keep going."

Keith, who has been at Aston Villa FC for almost 20 years, bought his set of hand-push 1940s mowers off eBay and Gumtree for just £65 in total.

Despite a back operation in April, he came back to create his masterpiece.

He added: "I had a back operation in April and I couldn't do anything for the first six weeks, my wife Kirsten did the first couple of pushes to keep the grass down."

Entering the competition for the second time, Keith missed out on the top three spots, but is still keen to enter next year.

He came fourth in the 2016 competition, having grafted to mow his lawn into a diamond shape with his two hand-push mowers.



Groundsman Keith Smith

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# New ride is making a big splash at Center Parcs

Report by Claire Spreadbury

**GETTING** into a two-person inflatable raft – in a swimming costume – is one of the most ungainly things you can possibly do.

But as I straddle the figure of eight-shaped rubber ring, gripping on to the handles and waiting for the green light of the Typhoon, I can't say I really care. We're all here for a bit of family fun, and trying out Center Parcs' newest water ride is making me feel a bit giddy.

## SO WHAT'S IT LIKE?

I'm not much of a water-slide fan any more. There's definitely something about getting older and having kids, that makes me less able to enjoy the sensation of feeling like my stomach is going to fall out my backside, and more miffed about the pain plunging into a pool gives me as the water shoots up my nose. But the Typhoon, I have to say, is great.

It's family friendly, so me and my eight-year-old Rosie, go down together (there is a height restriction of 1.22m, which she's only just over). It's fast and quick with a bit of splashing, but not so scary you lose your stomach or get washed up and spat out at the end (the inflatable raft helps with this).

To add to the fun factor, you can choose your own lighting theme – from treetops to rainbow – by pressing a button at the top, then swooshing down the tunnel.

## BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE...

For those needing something a little more exciting, the Tropical Cyclone has also just landed here at Long-leat Forest, but it's been in Center Parcs in Woburn for some time now.

Up to four of you can go on a raft at any one time and there are mega drops, adrenaline pumping twists and turns, and a world of swearing coming down the shoot, despite the same height restriction. It's not for the faint-hearted, but is a whole heap of fun.

The rides are the latest addition to the Subtropical Swimming Paradise, where even on a rainy day in the school holidays, it never feels too busy.

There are lots of different areas, so you can head to the main pool for squeals galore as you jump over the surf from the wave machine, splash about in a shallow kids' play area, hang out in the outdoor spa pool, and slide down flumes of every size and variety.

Oh, and be sure to drift down the lazy river at least 17 times, like us, and try out the fun rapids.

## WHAT ELSE TO DO?

What isn't there to do? The great thing about Center Parcs is there's an abundance of activities going on and you can choose how much, or how few, you fancy doing.

We try out Den Building and Decorating – one of the newer family activities. Unlike the usual sofa and sheets affair that goes on at home, we head out into the woods where three thin logs have been tied together to start us off. We have a massive pile of twigs, branches and logs, a tarpaulin, some leaves, and four pairs of hands ready to get dirty.

We work together to make a small, pyramid-shaped den, create some 'flowers' for the entrance by stabbing twigs through heaps of leaves and decorate some lovely signage.

At the end, all the families go round inspecting the different dens, and one person from each clan has to sit inside while the waterproofing test takes place, and then we have to dismantle the whole thing.

It costs £46.50 (however big your party) and lasts for an hour and a half. We had a really good time getting stuck in, but there are oodles of other activities too, from sports and quad biking, to ten-pin bowling and photography lessons. They all cost extra, but there's no pressure or upsell to do a thing.

## ADULTS ALSO GET TO HAVE FUN

The Aqua Sana spa can be used by day guests, as well as anyone staying at Center Parcs. The spa itself consists of 25 "experiences", from the Indian blossom steam room and the hydro pool, to the Tyrolean Sauna and Reflexology Footbaths. It's a spa that's been well thought-out and is a joy to slouch around, as you move from one meditative state to another.



Going in – the swimmers enter the water



Yoga on the beach is a great way to prepare



North Wales offers a spectacular setting for a swim

# Take a swim on wild side in North Wales

**WITH** the looming prospect of Brexit sending holiday prices Boeing-high, it is no surprise that British holidaymakers are giving in to the lure of staycations.

The UK is home to swathes of gorgeous countryside, fairy-tale villages and breathtaking mountainsides waiting to be explored, and one trend taking on a life of its own is open-water swimming.

With no expensive or bulky gear required, it offers a new adventure with minimum travel hassle – and it's guaranteed to burn off a few calories.

"The only limit is your own imagination," says Gabby Dickinson, founder and director of Gone Swimming (goneswimming.co.uk).

A passionate water baby from Anglesey, she built her wild swimming tour company five years ago after noticing a gap in the market for people who want a thrilling nature experience, but without the camping.

She now she takes groups of four to 12 – including couples, kids, grandparents, pets and people with disabilities – for swimming days around the most beautiful beaches and lakes in North Wales.

Every trip comes with generous supplies of her excellent home baking.

"I wanted to go on a swimming holiday but there was nothing available that I wanted to do," she tells me. "So I invented a trip where you can eat lots of cake, stay in cosy places, and just have a nice time."

The sense of freedom that comes from the bracing waters, she explains, has limitless rewards – even when it comes to mental health.

"A lot of my guests are recovering from or coming to terms with mental health problems and there has been a lot in the media about the benefits of swimming."

"I was diagnosed with depression and anxiety at 16 and always felt brilliant after I had been in the water."

"Sometimes I meet people who are nervous or scared, but once they get in their

## SPECIAL REPORT

Report by Francesca Gosling

eyes light up and it builds their confidence – they feel they can do anything.

"The best part of my job is being inspired every day by incredible people, who don't know how incredible they are until they swim across a lake."

With those words I can't resist the chance to have a go, starting with a morning plunge into the waves at Black Rock Sands beach, steps away from Haven's (haven.com) cosy caravans at Greenacres Holiday Park, Porthmadog.

After a gentle hour of seafront yoga – which I am now convinced is the only way to do the downward dog – we steel ourselves for our first steps into the Irish Sea.

At a late summer water temperature of 16C, it's not easy, but it's absolutely worth it. Once in, I'm instantly invigorated and paddle back feeling a million times lighter – and definitely deserving of some cockle-warming with Gabby's traditional Welsh bara brith tea loaf and seriously chocolatey tiffin cakes.

For our second swim we drive through the rolling, Lord Of The Rings-esque hills of the stunning Snowdonia National Park to Llyn Dinas lake – a glassy-still expanse wall-papered with the striking craggy landscape of the famous Snowdon.

It's an entirely different and very peaceful experience. Just a few minutes simply floating in the secluded 15C rainwater-fed oasis makes me more relaxed than a day sweating on a busy beach – and the sense of achievement afterwards is satisfying!

Group days out with Gabby and the Gone Swimming team start from £65 per adult and £55 per child (with private options available).

Gabby recommends avoiding rivers as the current can often change much more strongly and frequently than you might think. Never go swimming alone and always check weather and currents before you dip.



Francesca Gosling felt on top of the world trying wild swimming

## EasyJet making it simple for connecting flights



EasyJet is making travel easier for passengers

**EASYJET** will provide feeder traffic to long-haul carriers for the first time, the budget airline has announced.

Passengers taking connecting flights via London Gatwick – such as those travelling from Aberdeen to New York – will be able to book the entire trip on EasyJet's website.

The airline has formed a partnership with Norwegian and WestJet, offering flights to North and South America and the Far East.

Under the Worldwide scheme, passengers will also be able to connect with other EasyJet flights.

About 200,000 passengers a year connect

from one EasyJet flight to another at Gatwick, but they have previously needed to book each flight separately and transfer their own luggage.

The announcement represents one of the most significant strategic changes made by the airline since it introduced allocated seating in 2012.

Bookings will include the Gatwick-Connects service, meaning passengers' checked luggage will be transferred to their second flight.

If they miss their connection they will be given a seat on the next available flight free of charge.

EasyJet said it will sign up other airlines to the new system and discussions are "already far advanced" with Middle

Eastern and Far Eastern carriers.

It plans to expand to other key airports in Europe such as Milan Malpensa, Geneva, Amsterdam, Paris Charles de Gaulle and Barcelona.

EasyJet has insisted the scheme will not impact on its punctuality or operating model.

It will not hold flights for connecting passengers, who will be subject to a minimum connection time of two and a half hours between flights.

The airline will also begin selling standalone tickets on behalf of Loganair from next month, allowing EasyJet customers to book onward flights from destinations such as Glasgow and Edinburgh to Scotland's Highlands and Islands.



# £57m halls are alive with sound of music

THE West Midlands has music facilities to rival the best in the world following the opening of a £57 million music school and concert venue.

That is the view of Professor Julian Lloyd Webber, principal of Birmingham City University's impressive multi-purpose Conservatoire.

The stunning building, which took two years to construct, features five public performance spaces - including a 500-seat concert hall, a 150-seat recital hall and a 100-seat organ studio. In the Eastside Jazz Club it also boasts the only permanent jazz space in any UK conservatoire.

It is the first purpose-built conservatoire to be built in the country for 30 years, and Prof Lloyd Webber says due to funding constraints he thinks it will be the last.

"The new conservatoire emerges during a difficult time for arts funding and music education, meaning our role in training the world's next great musicians and actors is more vital than ever," he said at the launch. "Personally, I don't think there will be another one built in the UK."

## Elite

"Of course, a building is only as effective as the people inside it, and my team and I will continue our work to ensure that the future arts industry is not dominated by the wealthy elite. Our impressive programme of learning and widening music participation benefits thousands of children, young people and their families from diverse communities across England, and our new home will become the central hub of all these activities."



Professor Julian Lloyd Webber chats to harpist Natasha Gale




The impressive main concert hall contains 500 seats for larger concerts

Prof Lloyd Webber, appointed principal in 2015, said the facilities on offer were of 'world class standard', but added competing with other top rated music colleges was a challenge due to funding disparities.

"The Royal College of Music and The Royal Academy [of Arts] are each fundraising more than £4 million a year and they also get massive grants,

which we had taken away from us because we are not a stand alone institution. So we are being hit on all sides, which is very tough on the university because we are completely dependent on them."


The venue's inaugural season is set to start on March 11 with a Royal Gala concert performed by the Birmingham Conservatoire Symphony Orchestra.




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# Stand up is about instant gratification

**H**e fancied doing something when he was planning his autumn tour for 2017. So Mark Watson decided to take the most contrary approach possible. He named his tour MW and only agreed to visit towns and cities where either the place or the venue began with one of those consonants. So while Mawnan Smith, Much Wenlock (double points – an M and a W) and Middle Wallop were in, Stafford, Lichfield and other non-MW towns were out.

The novel approach was intended not just to give Watson a talking point – and that, it surely does. It was also designed so that he'd visit off-the-beaten track towns – he's surely never played Westbury-on-Trym before – ahead of a return to a tried and tested path next year.

Happily, the Mac, at Birmingham, gave him the opportunity to visit the Second City and Mark will be in town on October 6.

He's enjoyed mixing it up and visiting new venues. "It's hard to get round all the places you want to go to when you book a tour. No matter where you go, people will tell us we didn't go to the right place. So we were thinking of a way to whittle it down. As a joke, we had neon initials made of an M and a W.

"So the beginning of the joke was that we only played places that began with M or W. Gradually we started to gather places together and realised that there were enough to do a tour. It's quite a nice schedule of places I haven't been to before."

## ALPHABET

MW will, therefore, ruminate on Mark's unique approach to touring. But fans can expect a little more than Watson's alphabet soup. And visiting new venues and new towns means he's more likely to improvise than if he's returning to favourite haunts.

"There's certain material I'll do and have confidence in. But it's much more challenging in a new town; it certainly puts you on your mettle. But that's no bad thing. It provides you with more of a chance to interact with the audience because you're learning on the spot."

Mark will dwell on the need for people to understand one another and empathy on his present tour. The material has gone down well and Mark's enjoying his time on the road, with shows through to February. Bigger things lie ahead.

"One of the reasons why I like the MW thing is that it's a rogue tour between bigger tours. If you do 80 or 90 shows, there are some bits, some chunks, that you get a little sick of. It's impossible not to. And I think the moment I feel that, the audience can tell because the freshness goes. So this set of shows are special because that can't happen.

"I like having enough of a script to never completely run out of material, but at the same time I will go off piste as often as I can, especially if there's interesting stuff in the audience. Sometimes I'll be asking the audience to write down things that I can mess around with. I tend to see it as a good thing if I can go off piste because I know I can get it back. As I get more experienced, I get better at steering the show.

"Years ago I did an interview with Eddie Izzard when I was doing work experience as a young 'un. He talked about a gig being like a motorway journey, you can go straight on but it's more interesting to go off on the little side roads. As long as you take it from one place to another, in between you can do as you like."

Mark is a happy tourer. He used to be ruthless about getting home after a show

*If all I did was write books I'd be bored – I like doing both*

but these days he likes to hang out. He'll enjoy visiting new towns or dropping by to visit relatives if he's in their neck of the woods. And if there's a little downtime before a show, he can always turn his hand to writing. The Celebrity Island contestant is an accomplished wordsmith who has written six novels. He believes comedy and writing go hand in hand.

"Both are about having ideas. I tend to use the novels to explore ideas in more depth and do stuff I wouldn't normally do on stage. Quite a lot of novels or books are just an extension of what people do in real life. They're different to the shows. Logistically, it's quite difficult to do both because of the time they take. So I do a lot of writing on the road because otherwise it would be difficult to fit everything in. It's sort of in my blood to be doing it. It's natural to me to be doing that.

"Stand-up is about adrenalin and instant gratification. The audience is there and they laugh right away. But book writing gives you a much longer sense of fulfilment. They work well together. If all I did was write books, I'd be bored. If I just did stand up, it would be too frenetic. So I'm happy doing both."

● For more entertainment news and reviews see **The Ticket** in your Express & Star every Friday.





London band Flyte



## Take Flyte with rising stars of the music scene

One of the UK's best new bands are coming to Wolverhampton and Birmingham on tour to promote their brilliant debut album.

Flyte are a pop/rock quartet formed in London with a sound that straddles indie cool and commercial catchiness. Think Blossoms meet Alt-J with hints of Fleet Foxes, Bastille, The Feeling and Dodgy.

The album *The Loved Ones* is carefully constructed to emphasise the harmonies of the Hackney outfit, who were friends before they were band mates.

Three of the group, Will Taylor (guitarist/lead singer), Jon Supran (drums) and Nick Hill (bass) met at school and later met Sam Berridge (keyboard) when he was busking at Tottenham Court Road. "The Loved Ones is for the thoughtful listener. Like a book you can open

and read from start to finish. An album you would listen to on headphones on the bus to school, that is yours and no one else's," says lead singer Will.

Catch them on the way up at Newhampton Arts Centre in Wolverhampton on Wednesday (September 27) or at Birmingham's O2 Academy 3 on October 10.

Other gigs to look out for – rocker Deborah Bonham is at the Slade Rooms in Wolverhampton tomorrow night (Friday), the same night Big Country with singer Simon Hough play the Robin 2 in Bilston. Nik Kershaw headlines in Bilston on Saturday. Then Nashville country/blues singer Stacie Collins brings her band to the Robin 2 on Monday and funky US rockers Living Colour on Wednesday. Suzanne Vega is at Birmingham Symphony Hall on Tuesday.

## Animal magic in a ballet favourite

Birmingham Royal Ballet make a magical return home with an autumn season including a spectacular production of *Aladdin* and the ever-popular 'Still Life' at the Penguin Café.

First on the agenda at the Birmingham Hippodrome is a programme of three short ballets, from September 27 to 30. The triple bill includes Kenneth MacMillan's *Concerto*. Set to Shostakovich's Piano Concerto No.2, MacMillan's vigorous choreography conveys the infectious joy of dancing.

A colourful host of endangered animals seek shelter from the storm at the Penguin Café. Featuring a Morris dancing flea, a ballroom-dancing ram, a woolly monkey and more, 'Still Life' at the Penguin Café is a witty and poignant look at man's effect on the natural world.

The evening is completed by MacMillan's playful *Elite Syncopations*, where a host of characters flirt, dance and vie for the limelight, accompanied by Scott Joplin's ragtime piano music.

Then, next month, step onto a magic carpet and soar into the fantastical world of David Bintley's *Aladdin*, with music by BAFTA

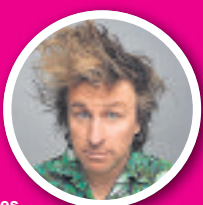
award-winning Carl Davis and vibrant designs from Dick Bird. The classic story of *Aladdin* and his adventures with a magic lamp is brought to life in this glittering production, featuring lavish sets and costumes, stunning special effects and beautiful choreography. Magic abounds when the Djinn of the Lamp appears, from dancing jewels to a larger than life Chinese lion.

*Aladdin* promises a dazzling spectacle for the whole family to enjoy and will feature live music from the Royal Ballet Sinfonia. It is being staged from October 3 to 7.



## Milton is keen to raise a laugh

Comedian Milton Jones is heading for the Black Country. The guy with the loud shirts and messy hair from *Mock the Week*, *Live at the Apollo* and *Radio 4* brings his new show – *Milton is Out There* – to Dudley Town Hall next Friday, September 29. Jones has won rave reviews for his inspired puns, absurdist one-liners and hilarious flights of fancy. Tickets are £26. See [www.boroughhalls.co.uk](http://www.boroughhalls.co.uk) or call (01384) 812812. He is also at Wolverhampton Civic Hall on November 4.



## Talented teens will hip hop to an Oz groove

Teenagers from Sandwell and Wolverhampton have joined forces with a professional dance company to put on a hip hop dance show in Birmingham. Pupils spent three weeks with the London-based ZooNation Dance company rehearsing a unique take on *The Wizard of Oz*.

*Groove On Down the Road* has already been staged in Wolverhampton and from Wednesday to Friday (September 27-29) is being performed at the Patrick Centre at Birmingham Hippodrome.

The show features 25 teenagers from St Matthias, Coppice Performing Arts, Our Lady and St Chad's schools in Wolverhampton and Shirelands Academy in Sandwell.

The show is staged 7.45pm nightly, see website [birminghamhippodrome.com](http://birminghamhippodrome.com) for tickets.

### COMMERCIAL FEATURE

## Doll & Teddy Bear Fair!

### THE GREAT AUTUMN DOLL & TEDDY FAIR

SUNDAY 24TH SEPTEMBER 2017

At The National Motorcycle Museum (Junction 6 M42) Coventry Road, Bickenhill, Solihull, B92 0EJ.

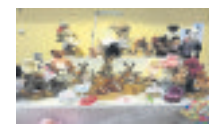
Up to 92 stands with a huge amount of quality collectable dolls and bears,



antique/artist dolls and bears, reborn dolls, plus related accessories such as

clothing, doll and bear kits, prams, dolls houses, mohair supplies, doll supplies, and much, much more....

Ample Free Parking.... Refreshments.....



Free valuations and repair advice, so bring your doll or bear along!

OPEN 10.30 to 4pm. ADULTS: £4 CHILDREN: Free SEE YOU THERE....

## THE GREAT AUTUMN DOLL & TEDDY FAIR SUNDAY 24th SEPTEMBER

Open 10.30 - 4pm

The National Motorcycle Museum

(Junction 6 M42) Birmingham

Up to 90 quality stands of dolls, bears and related juvenilia

ADMISSION £4 CHILDREN FREE **FREE PARKING**

For further information contact Debbie Woodhouse **07973 760881**



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## Olde Queens Head

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CHOICE



Tess Daly

**Strictly Come Dancing (BBC1, 6.25pm)**  
The pro-celebrity dance contest makes its grand return to screens, two weeks after a special introductory programme announced the dancer partnerships, and paid tribute to the show's late presenter Bruce Forsyth. Now though, the competition is ready to get under way, as incoming judge 'Queen of Latin' Shirley Ballas and her fellow panellists Bruno Tonioli, Craig Revel Horwood and Darcy Bussell get their first taste of what the dancing duos are capable of achieving. None of the 15 stars taking to the dance floor this weekend will be exiting this week, though. Instead, their scores will carry over to next weekend, when viewers get a chance to vote for their favourite couples.

BBC1

**6.00** Breakfast. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** The Hairy Bikers' Comfort Food. (R) **12.00** Football Focus. **1.00** BBC News; Weather. **1.15** Bargain Hunt. (R) **2.00** Cycling: Road World Championships. Live coverage of the women's elite road race in Bergen, Norway. **4.00** Final Score. **5.15** BBC News. **5.25** Regional Programme. **5.35** Pointless Celebrities. Liz Pichon, Pam Ayres, Quentin Letts, Yasmin Alghai-Brown, Jill Mansell, Jimmy McGovern and Mark Watson take part in a celebrity writer-themed edition of the unorthodox quiz. **6.25** **Strictly Come Dancing.** The pro-celebrity dance contest returns, as judges Shirley Ballas, Bruno Tonioli, Craig Revel Horwood and Darcy Bussell get a taste of what the dancing duos are capable of. **8.45** **Casualty.** Iain is stunned when former registrar Samantha Nicholls shows up the ambulance station ready for her first day as a paramedic. The pair struggle to adjust to their new working relationship, any questions Iain has are put out of mind when he and his new partner are called to rescue a shy woman from a car crash. Meanwhile, back at the ED, Alicia decides to play matchmaker for Jacob and Elle as they work together to care for fun-loving elderly couple Iona and Margie. **9.35** **Mrs Brown's Boys.** Agnes fears her family is planning to send her to a nursing home, when in fact it is Spartacus the dog who is set to be sent away. (R) **10.05** BBC News; Weather; National Lottery Update. **10.25** **Match of the Day.** Gary Lineker presents highlights of the latest Premier League matches, including West Ham United v Tottenham Hotspur and Southampton v Manchester United. **11.55** **People Just Do Nothing.** Miche and Grindah's wedding day arrives, and while the bride longs for a fairytale ceremony, the groom is more excited about Kurupt FM's first-ever daytime rave. Last in the series. **12.25** **Film: Hollywood Homicide.** (2003) Two cops dream of escaping their jobs until their skills are challenged by the baffling case of a rapper murdered on stage. Action comedy, starring Harrison Ford. **2.15** Weather for the Week Ahead. **2.20** BBC News.

BBC2

**6.15** The NFL Show. (R) **6.45** How We Won the War. (R) **7.15** **Film: African Cats.** (2011) **8.45** **Film: Kitty Foyle.** (1940) **10.30** Railways of the Great War with Michael Portillo. (R) **11.00** Coast. (R) **12.00** Rick Stein's Long Weekends. (R) **1.00** Cheetahs – Growing Up Fast. (R) **2.00** Flog It! **2.30** Mastermind. (R) **3.00** University Challenge. (R) **3.30** Only Connect. (R) **4.00** Cycling: Road World Championships. Concluding live coverage of the women's elite road race in Bergen, Norway. **5.30** Gardeners' World. (R) **6.30** **The Big Family Cooking Showdown.** Culinary competition hosted by Zoe Ball and Nadia Hussain in which two families face a series of challenges based on the realities of everyday meals. (R) **7.30** **Front Row.** New series. Radio 4's long-running review show makes the leap to TV screens, as Giles Coren is joined by Mihal Arthanayake and Viv Groskop to explore the arts world this week. **8.00** **Grand Tours of the Scottish Islands.** Paul Merton returns to explore more of the remote and fascinating places that lie off the mainland, beginning by visiting Berneray, Grimsey, Kirkbost and Pabbay. (R) **8.30** **Dad's Army.** Jones's reputation is called into question by an old comrade's allegations about his conduct at the Battle of Omdurman in Sudan. Comedy, starring Arthur Lowe and Clive Dunn. (R) **9.00** **Later – with Jools Holland 25th Birthday Show.** The BBC's flagship live music show returns for a special edition marking the programme's 25th anniversary. On the bill this evening are chart-topping US rockers Foo Fighters, who made their debut Later appearance back in 1997. Paul Weller, who first took to the stage for the show back in 1993, performs an acoustic set, and Dizzee Rascal brings some of his most popular tracks, alongside one from his new album Raskit. Also stepping up to the microphone this evening are singer-songwriters Van Morrison and KT Tunstall, American jazz vocalist Gregory Porter, chanteuse Camille, and Mali-based ensemble Songhoy Blues. **11.00** **Film: Brighton Rock.** (2010) **12.45** **Film: The Stepford Wives.** (2004) **2.10** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

**6.00** CITY: Sooty. **6.10** Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. (R) **6.20** Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.45** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **7.00** Mission Employable. (R) **7.05** Oddbods. (R) **7.10** Oddbods. (R) **7.20** Super 4. (R) **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show. (R) **7.50** Scrambled!: Pangbone. (R) **8.10** Scrambled!: The Foodpuff Girls. (R) **8.30** Scrambled!: Star Wars: The Yoda Chronicles. (R) **9.05** Scrambled!: Adventure Time. **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** Saturday Morning with James Martin. **11.25** The Hungry Sailors. (R) **12.20** ITV News; Weather. **12.25** Midsomer Murders. (R) **2.25** The Chase. (R) **3.25** The X Factor. (R) **4.25** Little Big Shots. (R) **5.30** Regional Programme. Weather. **5.40** ITV News; Weather. **6.00** **Cannonball.** Andrew Flintoff hosts the action-packed game show, in which contestants tackle a series of water-based, obstacle course challenges in the hope of claiming the Cannonball Cup. **7.00** **The Family Chase.** Bradley Walsh challenges the Ghandis from London to pit their general-knowledge know-how against that of the show's professional quizzers. **8.00** **The X Factor.** Dermot O'Leary hosts the final weekend of auditions, as the judges' nationwide talent-seeking tour draws close to its conclusion. As always, expect to see a wide variety of talent, from the sublime to the absurd, as Simon Cowell, Sharon Osbourne, Nicole Scherzinger and Louis Walsh deliver their verdicts to the latest batch of would-be stars seeking a moment in the spotlight. **9.15** **The Jonathan Ross Show.** The host welcomes another selection of celebrity guests to take a seat on his sofa, as he embarks on another round of no-holds-barred questioning. This time, Hollywood comedy actor, writer and producer Mel Brooks visits the studio, along with three-time Formula 1 world champion Lewis Hamilton, and the newly married Russell Brand. **10.20** ITV News; Weather. **10.35** **Film: Nutty Professor II: The Klumps.** (2000) Comedy sequel, with Eddie Murphy and Janet Jackson. **12.30** Jackpot247. **3.00** The Hungry Sailors. (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

**6.00** Triathlon: Ironman Wales. **6.25** Mobil 1 The Grid. **6.55** Motor Sport: Caterham. **7.20** Motor Sport: British Rally Championship. **7.45** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.10** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.35** Frasier. (R) **9.05** Frasier. (R) **9.35** The Big Bang Theory. **10.05** The Big Bang Theory. **10.30** The Big Bang Theory. **10.55** The Simpsons. (R) **11.25** The Simpsons. (R) **11.55** Come Dine with Me. (R) **12.25** Come Dine with Me. (R) **12.55** Come Dine with Me. (R) **1.30** Come Dine with Me. (R) **2.00** Come Dine with Me. (R) **2.30** Homes by the Sea. (R) **3.35** A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. (R) **4.35** A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. (R) **5.35** Location, Location, Location. (R) **6.30** **Channel 4 News.** **7.00** **Britain's Ancient Tracks with Tony Robinson.** New series. The Time Team veteran returns to tell the stories of trackways that have been in use in Britain for more than 5,000 years. Having previously travelled the length of the Icknield Way, the Ridgeway and the North Downs Way, he now tackles an ancient route in Dartmoor, taking in what was reputed to be a bottomless lake, and encountering a four-legged beast. **8.00** **WWII's Great Escapes: The Freedom Trails.** Monty Hall continues to highlight the stories of Allied soldiers who managed to escape from Nazi-occupied territories during the Second World War. This time, he turns his attention to the tale of Len Harley, the British POW who liberated himself from an internment camp in Italy. Retracing the soldier's steps takes Monty through the perilous Majella mountains, which Harley traversed in deep winter while being hunted by German soldiers. Plus, the man himself – now 98 – is reunited with Rosina Spinosa, one of the people who offered him shelter during his ordeal. **9.00** **Film: Cowboys & Aliens.** (2011) Premiere. Sci-fi Western, with Daniel Craig, Harrison Ford, Olivia Wilde and Sam Rockwell. **11.20** **Film: Survivor.** (2015) A US embassy official based in London goes on the run after being framed for a terrorist bombing. Thriller, starring Mila Jovovich. **1.05** Speed with Guy Martin. (R) **2.25** Hollyoaks. **4.30** Location, Location, Location. (R) **5.25** Too Many Cooks. (R)

CHANNEL 5

**6.00** Milkshake! **10.05** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.40** Dogs Make You Laugh Out Loud. (R) **11.00** Police Interceptors. (R) **12.00** Police Interceptors. (R) **1.00** Police Interceptors. (R) **2.00** Police Interceptors. (R) **3.00** Nightmare Tenants, Slum Landlords. (R) **4.00** Nightmare Tenants, Slum Landlords. (R) **5.00** The Nightmare Neighbour Next Door. (R) **6.00** **The Nightmare Neighbour Next Door.** The story of a Preston couple who retaliated against their neighbours for playing loud music, only to regret it when they came home to find their locks glued and their van scratched. Determined to find the truth they installed CCTV – and before long, tensions boiled over. Plus, a woman and her son whose hopes of a fresh start were ruined when their neighbours complained about their beloved pet dog, and how life in a Bournemouth retirement complex was threatened by an abusive new arrival who assaulted two fellow residents. (R) **7.00** **Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away.** Agents in central London to try and recover almost £1,900 owed in parking fines, while officers Stewart and Vic chase over £2,200 owed by a scrap yard owner. (R) **8.00** **Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away.** Steve and Ben visit a tenant who owes £14,000 in unpaid rent, while Brian and Del chase a debt of over £10,000 owed to a van rental business for damaged vehicles. (R) **8.55** **5 News Weekend.** **9.00** **Football on 5: The Championship.** Colin Murray introduces highlights from the weekend's games, including Derby County v Birmingham City, Sunderland v Cardiff City, and Aston Villa v Nottingham Forest. **10.00** **Football on 5: Goal Rush.** Colin Murray introduces all the goals from the weekend's games in Leagues One and Two, including Fleetwood Town v Southend United, and Colchester United v Wycombe Wanderers. **10.30** **NCIS: Los Angeles Movie – Race Again.** **12.00** SuperCasino. **3.10** Gotham. **4.50** Divine Designs. (R) **5.15** Wildlife SOS. (R) **5.45** Chinese Food in Minutes. (R)

DIGITAL

**BBC Four**  
**7.00** The Incredible Human Journey **8.00** Wild China **9.00** Black Lake **10.30** James May: The Reassembler **11.00** Top of the Pops: 1984 **12.00** Fleetwood Mac – Don't Stop **1.00** Bright Lights, Brilliant Minds: A Tale of Three Cities **2.00** Wild China **3.00** Close **ITV2**  
**12.00** The X Factor **1.05** Take Me Out **2.20** You've Been Framed! Gold **3.20** **Film: Babe** (1995) **4.20** FYI Daily **4.25** **Film: Babe** (1995) **5.10** **Film: The Smurfs** (2011) **6.10** FYI Daily **6.15** **Film: The Smurfs** (2011) **7.15** **Film: Gravity** (2013) **8.15** FYI Daily **8.20** **Film: Gravity** (2013) **9.00** **Film: 2 Fast 2 Furious** (2003) **10.00** FYI Daily **10.05** **Film: 2 Fast 2 Furious** (2003) **11.15** Family Guy **12.45** American Dad! **1.10** **Celebrity Juice** **1.55** Bromans **2.45** **Teleshopping** **5.45** **ITV2** **Nightscreen**  
**ITV3**  
**11.00** **Film: Columbo: Playback** (1975) **12.35** **Agatha Christie's Marple** **2.35** **Foyle's War** **7.00** **Midsomer Murders** **11.05** **Sherlock Holmes: The Last Vampyre** **1.10** **On the Buses** **2.05** **ITV3** **Nightscreen** **2.30** **Teleshopping**  
**ITV4**  
**11.00** **Fishing Allstars** **12.00** **British Touring Car Championship Highlights** **1.30** **ITV Racing: Live from Ayr** **2.00** **Coverage of today's race meetings at Ayr and Newbury** **4.20** **World Cup Rivalries: Brazil v Italy** **4.35** **Film: Ferris Bueller's Day Off** (1986) **5.35** **FYI Daily** **5.40** **Film: Ferris Bueller's Day Off** (1986) **6.45** **Hornblower** **9.00** **Film: Executive Decision** (1996) **10.05** **FYI Daily** **10.10** **Film: Executive Decision** (1996) **11.40** **Film: Don't Say a Word** (2001) **12.40** **FYI Daily** **12.45** **Film: Don't Say a Word** (2001) **2.00** **The Classic Car Show** **2.45** **Snooker v Darts** **2.50** **ITV4** **Nightscreen** **3.00** **Teleshopping**  
**E4**  
**12.10** **Rude(ish) Tube Shorts** **12.30** **The Goldbergs** **3.00** **Don't Tell the Bride** **4.00** **The Great British Bake Off** **5.15** **The Great British Bake Off: An Extra Slice** **6.00** **The Big Bang Theory** **9.00** **Film: Priest** (2011) **10.50** **Naked Attraction** **11.55** **Celebs Go Dating** **3.00** **First Dates** **3.55** **How I Met Your Mother** **4.40** **Rude(ish) Tube**  
**Film4**  
**11.00** **The Rugrats Movie** (1999) **1.00** **Johnny English Reborn** (2011) **3.05** **A Monster in Paris** (2011) **4.50** **The Poseidon Adventure** (1972) **7.15** **Airplane II: The Sequel** (1982) **9.00** **Speed** (1994) **11.15** **The Mechanic** (2011) **1.05** **V/H/S/2** (2013) **3.05** **Close**

COMMERCIAL FEATURE

FANTASTIC CARVERY 7 DAYS A WEEK

They always say never judge a book by its cover so we decided to check out The Park Lane Tavern in Colley Gate, and I have to say what was on offer in there was a total surprise.



It serves a carvery option 7 days a week from midday which consists of a choice of 4 meats, turkey, beef, pork and gammon and accompanied by stuffing, Yorkshire puddings and up to 12 vegetables, topped off with what they call their 'secret recipe gravy' known also as what mother used to make! All this for just £4.99 for a lunchtime meal or £5.99 evenings and Saturdays and £7.99 for Sunday lunch represents extremely good value by today's standards.

They also don't forget their mini diners with 'Kids Eat Free' Monday to Saturday between 3pm and 6pm and during school holidays it's All Day Monday to Saturday.

But it doesn't stop there they also have a full main menu consisting of the classic pub favourites such as steaks, mixed grills, burgers and fish and chips, where the fish would not be out of place in any issue of 'Moby Dick'. To finish is there very tempting dessert menu, that's if you have room after the size of meals you get at The Park Lane Tavern.

Then if that's not enough choice for you you can also choose for the breakfast which is served Friday, Saturday and Sunday 08.30am until 11.00am. Their breakfast is a buffet style 'All you can eat' with enough choice to satisfy any diner from eggs 2 ways, bacon, sausage, mushrooms, baked beans, hash browns, black pudding, grilled fresh tomatoes, toast & fried bread. There's even



jam for your toast if you still not full after all that.

Half Price Monday

They also host special evenings like their 'Half Price Monday' which has proven to be very popular, and why not, already reasonably priced selected main meals off their main menu (which includes steaks) at half price served between 5pm and 8pm every Monday. Also their psychic evenings where for £15 you get a reading from a medium and a carvery, for those believers amongst you that must be a bargain.

You get a very friendly feeling when you enter The Park Lane Tavern and that's mostly down to the staff. Happy to see you and always keen to help. They have a lot of regular customers and it's been known for a customer's drink to be poured and waiting for them before they reach the bar, you don't see that at many places nowadays.

There are no airs or graces at The Park Lane Tavern, you get delicious food at great prices served by happy staff in a comfortable environment. No wonder this place has people returning time after time.



# SUNDAY'S TV SEPTEMBER 24

## CHOICE



Benedict Cumberbatch

### The Child in Time (BBC1, 9pm)

The life of Stephen Lewis, a successful children's author, falls into tatters when his only child - four-year-old Kate - disappears in a supermarket. Torn apart by the scale of their loss, Stephen and his wife Julie end up going their separate ways, and three years later, a distraught Stephen still finds himself conducting daily, futile searches for his missing daughter, haunted by the horrifying moment that ruined his small family unit. As both Stephen and Julie struggle independently to deal with their all-consuming grief, the passage of time brings a promise of hope for the future. Drama, based on Ian McEwan's Whitbread Prize-winning novel of the same name, starring Benedict Cumberbatch.

## BBC1

**6.00** Breakfast. **7.30** Match of the Day. (R) **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** Sunday Morning Live. **11.00** Regional Programme. **12.15** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News: Weather. **1.15** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **2.15** Money for Nothing. (R) **3.00** Escape to the Country. (R) **3.45** Points of View. **4.00** Songs of Praise. **4.35** How to Stay Young. (R) **5.35** Invictus Games 2017. Ade Adepitan and Daraine Mulvihill present action from day one of the staging of the multi-sport event for injured or sick armed forces personnel and veterans from Toronto, Canada, featuring athletics from York Lions Stadium, with reports from Stef Reid. Plus, highlights of the opening ceremony, which featured contributions from Prince Harry and Mike Myers.

**6.35** BBC News.

**6.50** Regional Programme.

**7.00** **Countryfile**. Leading competitive shepherds from England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales gather at Hampstead Heath for Countryfile's 2017 One Man and His Dog contest. Bringing a traditional country contest to the heart of the British capital, Matt Baker and Charlotte Smith preside over proceedings, which will see sheep grazing on the Heath for the first time in 60 years.

**8.00** **Antiques Roadshow**. The team values more decorative objects and rarities.

**9.00** **The Child in Time**. Drama, starring Benedict Cumberbatch, telling the story of a couple whose marriage is torn apart by the loss of a child. Based on Ian McEwan's Whitbread Prize-winning novel.

**10.30** BBC News.

**10.50** Regional Programme.

**11.00** **Have I Got Old News for You**. Mel Giedroyc hosts this edition of the comedy news quiz from May 2013, with regulars Paul Merton and Ian Hislop joined by guest panellists Ross Noble and the Rev Richard Coles. (R)

**11.30** **The Women's Football Show**. A look at the biggest issues in the women's game, focusing on matters at both club and international level.

**12.10** NFL Highlights - Jacksonville Jaguars v Baltimore Ravens. Caroline Barker presents highlights of the match from the third round of fixtures. **1.10** Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.15** BBC News.

## BBC2

**6.05** Great British Garden Revival. (R) **7.05** Gardeners' World. (R) **8.05** The Beechgrove Garden. **8.35** Countryfile. (R) **9.30** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites - Sunday Edition. **11.00** Mary Berry's Foolproof Cooking. (R) **11.30** My Life on a Plate. (R) **12.15** MOTD2 Extra. **1.00** Cycling: Road World Championships. Live coverage of the men's elite road race in Bergen, Norway. **4.30** The Wonder of Animals. (R) **5.00** Flog It! (R)

**6.00** **Tribes, Predators & Me**. Gordon Buchanan travels around the world, learning traditional hunting methods from members of tribal cultures and joining them in pursuing dangerous predators. (R)

**7.00** **Top Gear**. Matt LeBlanc and Chris Harris go on a road trip across the US in convertible supercars, a journey that takes them from deserts to snow-capped mountains. Back at the test track, David Tennant is the Star in a Reasonably Fast Car, while Rory Reid comes up with a series of challenges to put the Alfa Romeo Giulia through its paces. (R)

**8.00** **Astronauts: Do You Have What It Takes?** The last remaining candidates are put through a series of challenges to determine who will go through to the final stage. A survival test and a 30-metre abseil put their leadership abilities under scrutiny, before they face a series of gruelling interviews by two guest experts. Those who are chosen to continue head to Florida's Kennedy Space Centre, for a spacewalk training session in an underwater lab.

**9.00** **Dragons' Den**. The panel considers the profit-making potential of a space age business venture, an African-inspired range of skincare products, and an online pub quiz app.

**10.00** **Live at the Apollo**. Glaswegian comedian Frankie Boyle takes to the stage at London's Hammersmith Apollo, and introduces rising stars Jack Carroll and Holly Walsh. (R)

**10.30** **Match of the Day 2**. Mark Chapman reviews the latest Premier League action, featuring Brighton & Hove Albion v Newcastle United at the AMEX Stadium.

**11.15** **Film: Boyz n the Hood**. (1991) **1.00** Sign Zone: Question Time. (R) **2.00** Holby City. (R) **3.00** This Is BBC Two.

## ITV

**6.00** CITV: Sooty. **6.10** Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. (R) **6.20** Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.45** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.55** Mission Employable. (R) **7.05** Oddbods. (R) **7.10** Oddbods. (R) **7.20** Super 4. (R) **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show. (R) **7.50** Scrambled!: Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **8.10** Scrambled!: Ben 10. (R) **8.30** Scrambled!: Be Cool, Scooby-Doo! (R) **8.05** Scrambled!: Adventure Time. **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** James Martin's French Adventure. (R) **10.00** Peston on Sunday. **11.00** Amazing Animal Births. (R) **11.30** Robson Green's Coastal Lives. (R) **12.00** Bigheads. (R)

**1.00** ITV News: Weather. **1.10** The Chase. (R) **2.10** The X Factor. (R) **3.25** **Film: Manny McPhee and the Big Bang**. (2010) **5.35** Victoria. (R)

**6.35** **Regional Programme**: Weather.

**6.40** **ITV News**: Weather.

**7.00** **Tipping Point: Lucky Stars**. Matt Le Tissier, Andy McLean and Steve Pemberton brush up their general knowledge.

**8.00** **The X Factor**. Dermot O'Leary presents the final selection of room auditions, as Sharon Osbourne, Nicole Scherzinger, Louis Walsh and Simon Cowell reach the last stop on their talent hunt.

**9.00** **Victoria**. The young monarch decides it is time to try her hand at foreign relations, as she and an entourage of servants and fellow royals set sail for France. King Louis Philippe has arranged for his son to marry the Queen of Spain, and diplomats in London have grown concerned that this could be the basis of a dangerous new alliance. However, on arriving at Louis Philippe's court, Victoria realises she will need to keep her wits about her if she is to have any hope of getting her wily French counterpart to take her seriously. Worse still, the young queen finds herself tackling this challenge alone, as Albert remains troubled by the revelations about his parentage, and is horrified into silence by the apparent decadence of the French court.

**10.05** **ITV News**: Weather. **10.20** Peston on Sunday. (R) **11.20** Liar. (R) **12.15** Jackpot247. **3.00** Motorsport UK. **3.50** British Superbike Championship Highlights. **4.40** ITV Nightscreen.

## CHANNEL 4

**6.20** Last Man Standing. **6.45** Last Man Standing. **7.10** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.35** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** The Simpsons. (R) **1.00** The Simpsons. (R) **1.30** **Film: Hulk**. (2003) Comic-book adventure, starring Eric Bana. **4.10** The Crystal Maze. (R) **5.10** The Great British Bake Off. (R)

**6.30** **Channel 4 News**.

**7.00** **Escape to the Chateau**. New series. Dick and Angel Strawbridge continue renovation work on their £280,000 chateau in France, and despite two-and-a-half years of attention, lots of problems remain.

**8.00** **Egypt's Great Pyramid: The New Evidence**. Documentary shedding light on how a discovery made at the foot of Egypt's Great Pyramid might explain the role ships and water played in the construction of these ancient monuments.

**9.00** **Electric Dreams: Impossible Planet**. The sci-fi anthology series continues with an adaptation of Philip K Dick's tale Impossible Planet, brought to the small screen by David Farr. Norton, a tour guide working on board an intergalactic cruise ship, believes his life is meaningless until he meets Irma. This supernaturally old passenger longs to go to Earth, a planet that has long since been destroyed. The ancient Irma offers a handsome paycheck to anyone who is willing to take her back to humanity's dead home-world, an opportunity that Norton's colleague Andrews is quick to exploit. However, as the pair begin their scam, Norton develops an unlikely bond with Irma, one that seems almost as important as the planet they are seeking. Starring Jack Reynor, Benedict Wong and Geraldine Chaplin.

**10.05** **8 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown**. Jimmy Carr hosts the comedy panel show's version of the words-and-numbers quiz, with Jon Richardson and Cariad Lloyd taking on guest captain Alan Carr and Kevin Bridges. (R)

**11.05** **Film: The Grand Budapest Hotel**. (2014) Wes Anderson's comedy drama, with Ralph Fiennes. **1.00** The Supremet. (R) **1.55** Location, Location. (R) **2.50** Grand Designs Australia. **3.45** Gillette World Sport. **4.15** KOTV Boxing Weekly.

## CHANNEL 5

**6.00** Milkshake!: Poppy Cat. **6.10** Little Princess. (R) **6.25** Mr Men. (R) **6.35** Milkshake! Monkey. (R) **6.40** Milkshake! Bopping About. (R) **6.45** Simon. (R) **6.50** Peppa Pig. (R) **6.55** Wissper. (R) **7.05** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.15** Bob the Builder. (R) **7.30** Fireman Sam. (R) **7.40** Olly the Little White Van. (R) **7.50** Paw Patrol. (R) **8.10** Blaze and the Monster Machines. (R) **8.35** Noddy: Toyland Detective. (R) **8.50** Floggals. (R) **9.00** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.15** Shimmer and Shine. (R) **9.30** Digby Dragon. (R) **9.45** Peppa Pig. (R) **9.55** Peppa Pig. (R) **10.05** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.40** Football on 5: The Championship. (R) **11.30** Football on 5: Goal Rush. (R) **12.00** Police Interceptors. (R) **1.00** **Film: Annie**. (2014) **2.00** 5 News Update. **2.05** **Film: Annie**. (2014) **3.15** Worst Weather Ever? (R) **4.10** Inside the Mega Twister. (R) **5.10** Killer Landslides. (R)

**6.10** **Sinkholes: Buried Alive**. The underlying forces behind sinkholes, which can occur gradually - when the surface subsides into bowl-shaped depressions - or suddenly, when the ground gives away. (R)

**7.00** **Cricket on 5**. England v West Indies. Action from the third one-day international in the five-match series, which took place at The Brightside Ground in Bristol.

**8.00** **Aviva Premiership Rugby Highlights**. Mark Durden-Smith and David Flatman introduce action from the fourth round of matches, including Bath v Newcastle Falcons, Saracens v Sale Sharks, and Exeter Chiefs v Wasps.

**8.55** 5 News Weekend.

**9.00** **Film: Olympus Has Fallen**. (2013) A disgraced secret service agent tries to redeem himself when terrorists take control of the White House. Action thriller, starring Gerard Butler, Aaron Eckhart and Morgan Freeman.

**10.05** 5 News Update.

**10.10** **Film: Olympus Has Fallen**. (2013) Action thriller, starring Gerard Butler.

**11.15** **Film: Enter the Dragon**. (1973) A former Shaolin monk recruited as a secret agent enters a kung fu contest in a bid to expose a drug ring. Martial arts thriller, starring Bruce Lee and Jim Kelly.

**1.15** SuperCasino. **3.10** Gotham. (R) **4.00** My Mum's Hotter Than Me! (R)

## DIGITAL

**BBC Four**

**7.00** Britain Beneath Your Feet **9.00** Listen to Britain 2017 **11.15** When Albums Ruled the World **12.45** Precision: The Measure of All Things **1.45** Treasures of the Louvre **3.15** Close

**ITV2**

**11.10** 2Awesome: Third Wheel **11.35** The X Factor **12.50** Take Me Out **2.05** You've Been Framed! **Gold 2.35** **Film: Evan Almighty** (2007) **4.40** **Film: The Smurfs 2** (2013) **6.45** **Film: The Smurfs 2** (2013) **6.45** **Film: The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey** (2012) **7.45** FYI Daily **7.50** **Film: The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey** (2012) **10.00** Family Guy **11.25** American Dad! **12.50** Through the Keyhole **1.55** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.30** Teleshopping

**ITV3**

**12.25** **Film: Death on the Nile** (1978) **1.25** FYI Daily **1.30** **Film: Death on the Nile** (1978) **3.15** **Film: Columbo: A Case of Immunity** (1975) **4.45** Wycliffe **7.00** Midsummer Murders **9.00** Sunday Night at the Palladium **10.00** By Royal Appointment **11.00** The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes **1.15** The Knock **3.10** Mr Selfridge **4.00** Griff's Great Britain **4.50** Judge Judy **5.10** On the Buses **5.35** ITV3 Nightscreen

**ITV4**

**3.15** **Film: The Dam Busters** (1954) **4.20** FYI Daily **4.25** **Film: The Dam Busters** (1954) **5.55** River Monsters **7.00** Fishing Alsters **8.00** The Chase Celebrity Special **9.00** **Film: Falling Down** (1993) **10.00** FYI Daily **10.05** **Film: Falling Down** (1993) **11.20** Car Crash Global **12.20** **Film: Don't Say a Word** (2001) **1.25** FYI Daily **1.30** **Film: Don't Say a Word** (2001) **2.35** The Car Chasers **3.00** Teleshopping

**E4**

**11.00** Don't Tell the Bride **12.00** My Hotter Half **1.05** The Goldbergs **2.40** **Film: Cheaper By the Dozen** (2003) **4.35** The Big Bang Theory **8.00** **Film: Volcano** (1997) **10.00** Naked Attraction **11.05** Gogglebox **12.10** Celebs Go Dating **2.20** Don't Tell the Bride **3.10** Ride Tube **3.35** Hollyoaks **Film4** **11.00** My Darling Clementine (1946) **1.00** Fletch (1985) **3.00** The Four Musketeers (1974) **5.05** The Two Faces of January (2014) **6.55** Life or Something Like It (2002) **9.00** Red (2010) Action thriller, starring Bruce Willis. **11.15** The Ladykillers (2004) Comedy remake, starring Tom Hanks. **1.25** Extract (2010) **3.20** Close



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FILM CHOICES

MONDAY

**The Last Stand, Channel 5, 11.05pm**

Disgraced narcotics cop Ray Owens retires into a quiet life as sheriff of a small town on the Mexican border. He gets the chance to prove his worth as a law enforcer when a drug lord escapes from prison and tries to flee the country – with his escape route taking him through Ray’s jurisdiction. Action thriller, starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, Johnny Knoxville and Forest Whitaker. (2013)

TUESDAY

**Unwanted Guest, Channel 5, 3.20pm**

With nowhere to go for winter break, Amy is invited to spend time with her friend Christine’s family. What begins as a nice bonding experience soon turns into a nightmare as Amy begins to lash out at her welcoming hosts. Thriller, starring Kate Mansi and Valentina Novakovic. (2016)



Up in the Air, Friday, BBC1, 11.55pm

WEDNESDAY

**Hidden Truth: Lies Will Surface, Channel 5, 3.15pm**

A young woman is forced to prove her brother’s innocence after a teenage girl is found murdered in a California town. But she discovers a disturbing dark side to the community, and the hidden identity of the killer. Thriller, starring Shawn Christian. (2016)

THURSDAY

**A Mother Betrayed, Channel 5, 3.15pm**

Five years after her husband is run off the road and killed by a mysterious driver, the head of a prosperous architectural firm decides to remarry. However, she’s unaware that her new spouse has a devious plan to steal her daughter, her sanity and even her life. Psychological thriller, starring Lynn Collins. (2015)

FRIDAY

**Up in the Air, BBC1, 11.55pm**

A corporate downsizing expert loves his life, detached from everyday existence and striving to achieve a personal goal of 10 million accumulated air miles. However, his lifestyle comes under threat by an up-and-coming executive with a revolutionary approach that would make his role all but obsolete. Comedy drama, starring George Clooney, Vera Farmiga and Anna Kendrick. (2009)

# Series is proving to be as safe as houses with Jack

**F**rom Escape to the Country to Relocation, Relocation, Relocation, there have been plenty of property programmes featuring people who want to escape the rat race and find their own rural retreat.

However, some more cynical viewers may have wondered whether a follow-up programme would show that the house hunters were now blissfully happy with their decision and fully immersed in the local community, or if they’ve found that moving from a bustling city to the middle of nowhere was more of a culture shock than they initially expected.

If it’s the latter, then at least ITV has got the ideal sitcom for them in the form of Bad Move, which started last week. Starring Jack Dee, who also co-wrote the series with Pete Sinclair, it follows husband-and-wife Steve (Dee) and Nicky (Kerry Godliman). The couple, who are both on their second marriages, have been seduced by relocation programmes and glossy lifestyle

magazines into thinking they want to live the simple life, away from the hustle and bustle of the city.

Unfortunately, as anyone who saw the first episode will know, it doesn’t take them long to realise that the reality didn’t quite live up to their expectations. They may now have beautiful surroundings, but their home is also situated in what the locals refer to as ‘the Dip’, an area devoid of internet signals. And as Steve is a website designer, that’s a major drawback.

Sadly, thanks to the estate agents, builders and architects, the couple can’t afford to simply sell up and move back to Leeds, especially as that would mean admitting the friends who told them they were making a mistake were right.

So, it looks like the couple will just have to put a brave face on it, although even that might be a bit of a stretch. After all, a lot of people would be wrongfooted by a sitcom where the famously deadpan Dee played someone happy with his lot. His previous sitcom Lead Balloon, centred on a misanthropic stand-

up comedian and it looks like Simon isn’t going to be much of a sunny optimist either.

Dee says: “Bad Move is a comedy about the grass always being greener on the other side of the fence – until you jump over the fence and realise it’s an algae-covered stagnant pond of sludge.”

This week, Steve and Nicky have even more reason to be despondent as they discover that while the internet can’t reach them, the floodwaters can, and their kitchen is now under water.

Nicky’s dad Ken (Philip Jackson) arrives with a pump and a disapproving expression, but Steve is starting to think the flood could actually be the answer to their problems...

However, Nicky takes a more practical approach to tackling their financial situation, as she decides to earn some cash as a dog walker. But when local rock star Grizzo (Seann Walsh) turns up with some alarming news, it looks like her new job is already at risk.



Jack Dee and Kerry Godliman star in Bad Move, Wednesday, ITV, 8pm

# BEST OF THE REST

WEDNESDAY

**The Pact BBC2, 10pm**

When they were teenagers, friends Amy and Andy made a pact that if they were both still single at the age of 35, they would marry each other. Twenty years later, Andy is now divorced with a four-year-old son and in a new relationship, and Amy lives in a flat-share, works behind a bar and has never been in a serious relationship. When the pair cross paths in a chance meeting, they are forced to face up to their pasts, and reconsider their futures. Comedy drama, starring Sarah Solemani and Brett Goldstein.

**National Lottery Awards 2017 BBC1, 10.45pm**

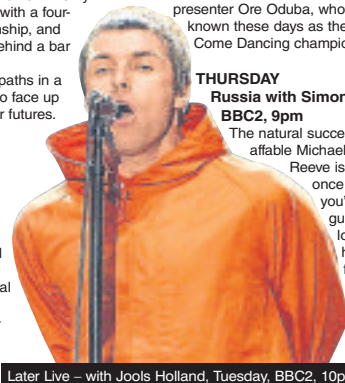
Lottery players raise £30 million each week for projects that make a difference to people, places and communities all across the UK. Now in their 15th year, the National Lottery Awards recognise the incredible impact of these Lottery-funded initiatives and this annual ceremony is a great way of celebrating the unsung heroes

who have improved people’s lives. There are seven categories, reflecting the different types of projects to benefit from the funding: Art, Education, Environment, Health, Heritage, Sport and Voluntary/Charity. Making his debut as host of the star-studded event is BBC Breakfast sports presenter Ore Oduba, who is perhaps better known these days as the reigning Strictly Come Dancing champion.

THURSDAY

**Russia with Simon Reeve BBC2, 9pm**

The natural successor to the always affable Michael Palin, Simon Reeve is back on his travels once again. This time (as you’ve probably already guessed of you’ve looked at the title) he’s off to Russia, a fitting destination as the 100th anniversary of the country’s revolution takes place this November. He



Later Live – with Jools Holland, Tuesday, BBC2, 10pm

begins his three-part exploration in the far east, from the rugged snow covered mountains of Kamchatka to Yakutia, the coldest inhabited region in the world. The only people making a living in temperatures that can drop as low as -30C are reindeer herders, but their traditional way of life is threatened by climate change. Reeve also explores China’s growing influence on the region.

**FRIDAY Britain by Bike with Larry & George Lamb Channel 5, 8pm**

Following in the recent footsteps of Jack Whitehall and Russell Howard, George Lamb is the latest TV personality to take his parent along for a jolly. His dad, of course, is former EastEnders star Larry, and the father-and-son duo are taking to two wheels to explore Britain’s National Parks from the saddle. Tonight they begin in the Yorkshire Dales where they meet a sheepdog trainer and wind their way to Malham Cove, a limestone cliff that is considered the jewel in the Dales’ crown. Next, they try their hand at making some of Skipton’s world-famous pork pies and go fly-fishing, before going their separate ways – with George retracing part of the 2014 Tour de France route and Larry opting for a more sedate history lesson on the navvies who built the magnificent Ribbleshead Viaduct.

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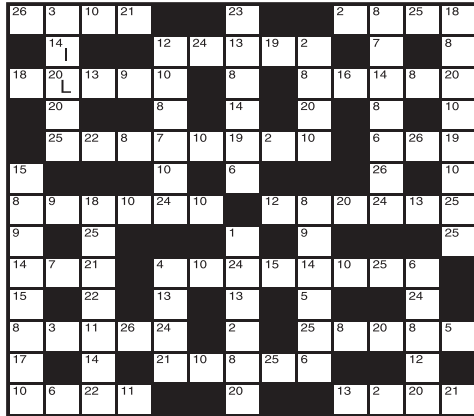


## BRAIN GYM

No.448

## Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	W	2	L	3	Q	4	D	5	P	6	C	7	S	8	G	9	X	10	E	11	U	12	V	13	N
14	R	15	O	16	Y	17	Z	18	J	19	T	20	A	21	I	22	H	23	B	24	F	25	K	26	M

## Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

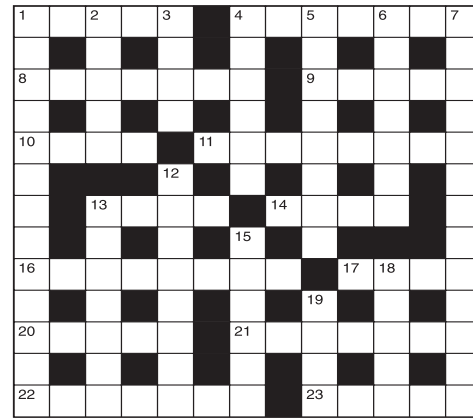
## Cryptic Clues:

## Across

1. It beats to death (5)
4. Highest type of mammal (7)
8. It will be a poor match with such contestants (7)
9. Turn out not to be one's choice (5)
10. Dash from France (4)
11. Invigorating new tune? (5,3)
13. Scope for entertainment (4)
14. Found unworthy of honour (4)
16. Marriage, for example, makes a nice change after all (8)
17. The image of Holy Russia (4)
20. One of a crowd of actors - no less! (5)
21. This piece needs rewriting to make it clear (7)
22. It could restore respect for a belief in ghosts (7)
23. Growth of production? (5)

## Down

1. Demolition workers with criminal intent (13)
2. It's made to contain spectacles (5)
3. Shut out in this way (4)
4. Unusual goal concerning many (6)
5. In an electric oven it controls the roast, perhaps (8)
6. Equipment in what must be a warship (7)
7. Amusement for which I rent men a tent perhaps (13)
12. Fall that impairs vision (8)
13. Handy place for a painter to mix his colours (7)
15. Wild capers may get you into one (6)
18. Famous clown has a drink (5)
19. Hold up the post somehow (4)



## Quick Clues:

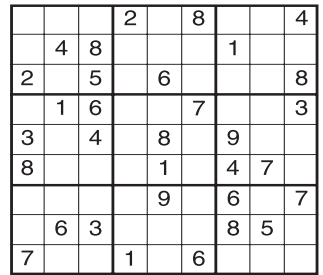
## Across

1. Rent (5)
4. Excuse (7)
8. Income (7)
9. Ponder (5)
10. Whirlpool (4)
11. Denial (8)
13. Circle (4)
14. Scrutinise (4)
16. In notion (8)
17. Notion (4)
20. Musical drama (5)
21. Antiquated (7)
22. Conjecture (7)
23. Sand hills (5)

## Down

1. Stealthy (13)
2. Black and blue (5)
3. Flavour (4)
4. Annoyed (6)
5. Charm (8)
6. Reproduction (7)
7. Play for safety (4,2,7)
12. Originate (8)
13. Relapse (7)
15. Leave (6)
18. Exhaust (5)
19. Sour (4)

## Sudoku



Fill in the grid above so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS:

9	6	7	3	4	1	2	8	5
4	5	1	7	2	8	6	9	3
2	8	3	9	6	5	7	1	4
7	1	5	4	8	3	9	6	2
8	3	9	6	1	2	4	5	7
6	4	2	5	7	9	1	3	8
3	7	6	1	5	4	8	2	9
5	2	4	8	9	6	3	7	1
1	9	8	2	3	7	5	4	6

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:  
 CRYPTIC - Across: 3 Afflicted; 8 Leer; 9 Reinforce; 10 Caddie; 11 Dread; 14 Match; 15 Like; 16 Towel; 18 Iona; 20 Eager; 21 Ebony; 24 Masses; 25 Bed-sitter; 26 Here; 27 President.  
 Down: 1 Blackmail; 2 Headstone; 4 Free; 5 Loner; 6 Choral; 7 Etch; 9 Right; 11 Dowry; 12 Disgusted; 13 Depressed; 17 Debar; 19 Abuses; 22 Noted; 23 Dear; 24 Mean.  
 QUICK - Across: 3 Impotence; 8 Tool; 9 Financial; 10 Lessen; 11 Sense; 14 Tinge; 15 Spar; 16 Reach; 18 Club; 20 Ahead; 21 Sedan; 24 Fluent; 25 Delicious; 26 Pair; 27 Wordiness. Down: 1 Athletics; 2 Consensus; 4 Main; 5 Orate; 6 Excess; 7 Clap; 9 Fever; 11 Slain; 12 Ephemeral; 13 Predatory; 17 Hauls; 19 Behind; 22 Align; 23 Zero; 24 Fuss.

## Quiz

1. On which island is the fishing port of Peel?
2. To which actress is composer Carl Davis married?
3. Who refers to God as the 'Great Architect of the Universe'?
4. Which British motorcycle manufacturer relaunched its Thunderbird?
5. What type of drug is reserpine?
6. Which engraver produced the series A Rake's Progress in 1735?
7. Who instigated the Great Leap Forward of 1958-1962?
8. Which sea did the Romans call mare nostrum?
9. Which French chemist developed the rabies vaccine?
10. What nationality was the artist Sidney Nolan?

## Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Light Amplification by Stimulated Emission of Radiation; 2 Ante meridiem; 3 Charles Dickens; 4 The Jacuzzi; 5 Harare; 6 A rattlesnake; 7 Princess Beatrice; 8 A coniferous tree; 9 The press; 10 Nevil Shute.

Niner: HAMSTRUNG

## Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

793257  
341163  
798445

gives a bad man,  
gives a second bad man,  
gives a businessman.

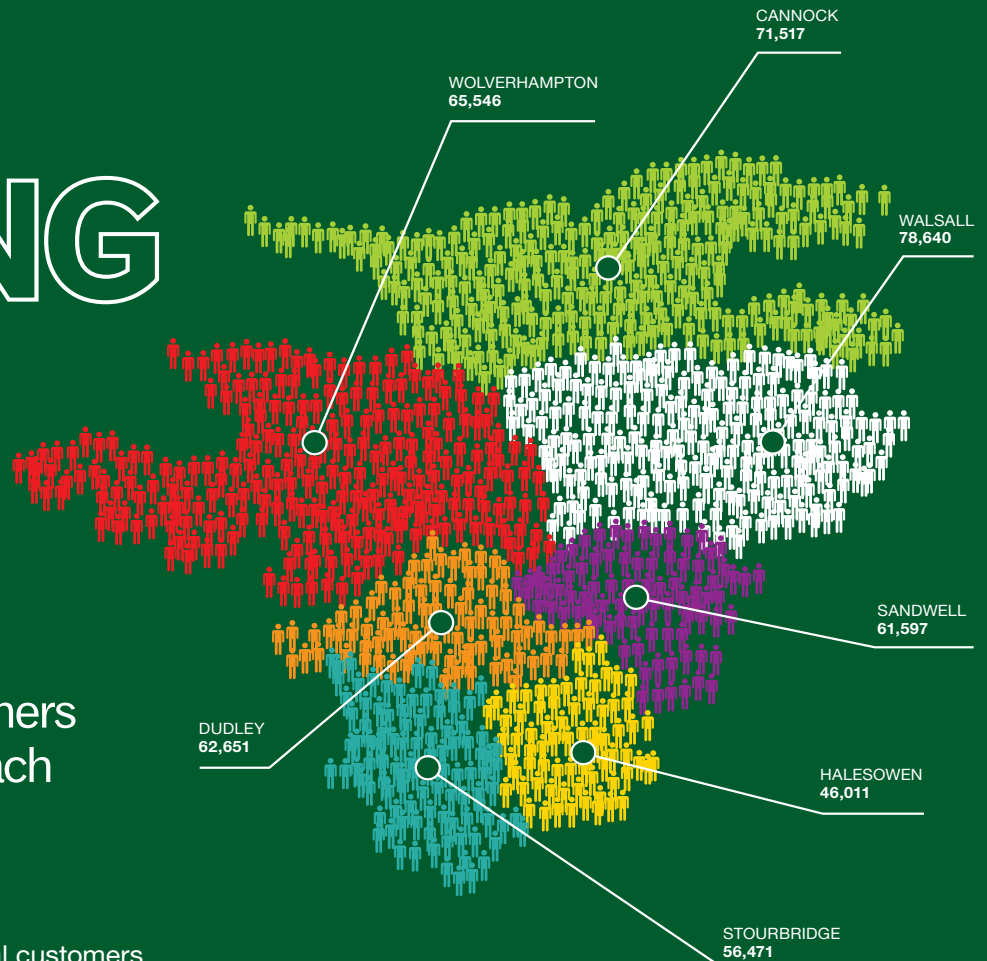
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
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# Greek delights are just be-Kos

THE words bespoke and boutique don't exactly spring to mind when you think of a Thomas Cook holiday.

They've cornered the market on the quintessential 'package holiday', but now they have a new travel treasure up their sleeve.

And I'm standing staring out over it, trying to figure out what's in the fresh juice that's just been blended at the juice bar opposite the reception area. It's the type of welcome treat I would expect to find at a yoga retreat or spa. Even on my journey into Casa Cook Kos, in Greece, I knew something was different.

Lush patches of greenery line either side of the road leading up to the property, and their purpose soon becomes apparent when I see a black and white sign with the words 'Farm to Table' written on it. I think I've just seen the vegetables and fruits I'll be eating for the next few days.

## COMFORTING

Seeing where your food is sourced from is comforting, but it also leaves no doubt in my mind that this is a new breed of hotel for Thomas Cook, aimed at a new market of travellers.

Casa Cook Kos follows the successful brand launch of Casa Cook Rhodes, which opened last year. This second ambitious property is located on the northern coast of Kos, in Marmari, and is less than a 20-minute drive from the airport.

The hotel aims to embrace the idea of *parea*, which roughly translated from Greek means a get-together with friends. It's small, with only 100 rooms, so it really feels like you're in a village oasis.

I'm staying in a junior suite, midway in the five room options available. By far its most impressive feature is that it has its own swimming pool, well, one which is

Making a splash – main pool area at Casa Cook



Luxury sleep – one of the bedrooms at the hotel



shared with the suite next door. And there's a hammock on the balcony. The rooms are plush, they haven't skimped on the decor.

The beach is a good 10-minute walk on either side before you hit any of the other resorts along the beachfront, so it feels really secluded. The sofa-like loungers also add to that luxury feeling.

The beach club, To Kima, is definitely the hotel's centrepiece and the perfect place to watch the spectacular Greek sunsets.

The breakfast buffet at Casa Cook Kos is the scene-

stealer. A large wooden table filled with bowls of fresh nuts, grains, honeys, homemade protein bars and more.

The menus bear the stamp of chef Ettore Botrini, whose Athens restaurant, Botrini's, was awarded a Michelin star in 2014.

And things to do? My first attempt at stand-up paddle boarding, one of the activities on offer doesn't end with me swallowing half of the Aegean. Luckily. Other activities on offer include horse riding and there's a well-equipped gym.

I also take part in an Aromatherapy oil-blending

session, which includes being shown how to make my own infused honey – complete with herbs I pick from the hotel's gardens.

What about families? I wonder if there's enough to keep children busy here, and my question is answered by a family I meet.

Their 10-year-old daughter has done yoga with her mum, and tells me the shared pool their room has is her favourite element, because she's made lots of new friends. This really is tailored to the new-age family.

KERRI-ANN ROPER

**StarReader Travel**  
Hand picked holidays with you in mind



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Your Chronicle

in association with  
**Omega**  
ABTA  
The Travel Association

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From  
**£119.95**  
per person



### GRASSINGTON DICKENSIAN FESTIVAL & Manchester's Christmas Markets

Departing Saturday 2 December 2017

#### PRICE INCLUDES...

- ✓ Overnight stay at a 3 or 4 star North West area hotel with 3-course dinner and full English breakfast
- ✓ Visit to Grassington Dickensian Festival
- ✓ Visit to Manchester's Christmas markets

2 days,  
by coach  
**only £119.95pp**

VIEW ONLINE AT  
[www.omega-holidays.com/DQX391](http://www.omega-holidays.com/DQX391)  
QUOTE CODE: DQX391

### YORK ST NICHOLAS CHRISTMAS FAYRE & Chatsworth House

Departing Saturday 25 November 2017

#### PRICE INCLUDES...

- ✓ Overnight stay at a 3 or 4 star Yorkshire or East Midlands area hotel with 3-course dinner and full English breakfast
- ✓ Visit to Chatsworth House (including admission) and Christmas market
- ✓ Visit to York St Nicholas Christmas Fayre

2 days,  
by coach  
**only £129.95pp**

VIEW ONLINE AT  
[www.omega-holidays.com/YMF763](http://www.omega-holidays.com/YMF763)  
QUOTE CODE: YMF763

### LINCOLN AND NOTTINGHAM Christmas Markets

Departing Saturday 9 December 2017

#### PRICE INCLUDES...

- ✓ Overnight stay at a 3 or 4 star Yorkshire or East Midlands area hotel with 3-course dinner and full English breakfast
- ✓ Visit to Nottingham Christmas Market & Winter Wonderland
- ✓ Visit to Lincoln Christmas Market

2 days,  
by coach  
**only £119.95pp**

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[www.omega-holidays.com/WVU519](http://www.omega-holidays.com/WVU519)  
QUOTE CODE: WVU519

For more information or to book, please call: **01902 902165**

OPENING TIMES: MON-FRI 8.30-19.00 SAT 8.30-16.00 SUN 10.00-16.00

Omega Holidays plc, ABTA V4782. Single room supplements £30pp. Subject to availability.





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(Blackheath) Ltd

Independent  
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Modern and traditional memorials  
Ring for FREE brochure  
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Or visit our showroom at  
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Halesowen B62 8EN**

www.halestonememorials.co.uk

## lost & found



MILLY

Missing from Friesland Drive, off Deans Road, WV1, female, white moustache and black spot on chest, microchipped but no collar. Very friendly so could be picked up or got in

a car and taken anywhere.

Please contact Hayley on

07988 991086.

1

## Family

## elderly & disabled

**PRIDE GO** electric mobility chair, used only 12 times, as new, £500 o.n.o. 07792 586229.

**WREKIN STAIRLIFTS** reconditioned lifts from £799. New available. 01952 405397/07897 273617

2

## Leisure Time

## car boot sales

## GIANT THURSDAY CAR BOOT SALE

This Thursday and every Thursday  
6am - 2pm at  
**Mill Lane,  
Saredon WV10 7LJ**  
Tel: 07831 192 116

## caravans / motorhomes

## We Want Your Motorhome

Finance Cleared  
Fast Secure Payment  
Top Prices Paid  
Please Call  
AEG on 01384 848439 or  
Lee Jinks on 07740 895448  
www.aegmotorhomes.co.uk

## SIX BERTH

**CARAVAN FOR SALE**  
**BRIDGNORTH**  
Eight years old.  
2 bedrooms.  
New carpets.  
Excellent condition.  
Beautiful site.  
Private fishing and clubhouse.  
Fees paid till March 2018.  
£9,000.  
07504 870652.

**DAMON CHALLENGER MOTOR HOME**  
2002.

Extended side, sleeps six, 34 ft long, 6.5 litre turbo diesel engine. Automatic gearbox. Fully serviced, MoT June 2018. Approx 55,000 km, own generator, air con.  
£22,750 ono  
Tel 0121 520 5318 or 07580 886112.

## PARK HOME MID WALES

2 double bedrooms,  
40x20,  
excellent position,  
11 months site,  
over 50's.  
£55,000.

01938 810245/07714 756645  
**STATIC CARAVAN** green decking, 8ft x 17ft, £500 ono. Shrewsbury, must dismantle and collect, excellent condition. 07802 444093.

**TUDOR AMBASEDEAR**  
2 bed caravan, sited at Coalport on quiet riverside site, fishing rights included in site rent, due on April 2018. The caravan is in its own fenced plot.  
£6,800 ono.  
01902 661129.

## caravans wanted

\*\*\*\*\*  
All Caravans Wanted  
Any Age or Condition  
\*CASH \* WAITING\*  
\*\*\*\*\*  
Immediate collection  
Call Bill on 07825 325 913  
\*\*\*\*\*

**WANTED ALL CARAVANS**  
Any age or condition  
Also motorhomes wanted.  
TOP PRICES PAID  
Immediate collection.  
CALL THOMAS  
07717 280 996  
www.tscaravansandmotorhomes.co.uk

**TOURING CARAVAN WANTED.**  
No objection to work, anything considered. Please telephone 07980 365757.

## music shop

VOCALIST REQUIRED

FOR ROCK BLUES BAND.

Wolverhampton area.

07587 222729.

## sports & leisure

## Free Ads

IT'S FREE, IT'S EASY  
For items upto £250.  
Online at  
bookanad.  
expressandstar.co.uk

## holidays

## travel abroad

READERS ARE REMINDED to check with any Advertiser that their holiday costs are fully covered by a recognised bonding or insurance scheme.

## mind, body & soul

## massage

**MOBILE Aromatherapy Massage**  
Therapist Home / Hotel. To book appointments call 07437 569187.

## 3 Home & Services

## furniture

**CLASSIC ITALIAN DINING TABLE**  
6 chairs, including 2 carvers, good condition. £350.  
**ITALIAN DISPLAY CABINET**  
with light, 2 parts, very good condition. £450.  
01384 270441.



## LEATHER SOFAS

Italian luxury leather 3 seater and 2 seater sofas for sale. Excellent condition, genuine

reason for sale.

£400 ono.

07966 176386.

## household appliances

**RED FRIDGE** / freezer, under worktop, 4 months old. £100. 01543 454727.

## items for sale

ADVERTISERS ARE REMINDED

That the Business Advertisements (Disclosure) Order of 1977 requires that advertisements must clearly differentiate between Private and Trade.

**ANTIQUES COLLECTABLES FURNITURE FOR SALE**  
(New and old)  
Sunday, September 24,  
At Grange Farm Shop,  
Albrighton.  
10am-2pm.  
07973 775560.

**GARAGE SALE** House Clearance, 10-3pm Saturday, September 23, 19 Lodge Road, Pelsall, W54 1DE. Call 07973 705739.

**HAVE YOU CHECKED** your advertisement today? We would respectfully remind advertisers that it is their responsibility to inform the publishers of any mistakes or inaccuracies on the first day of publication.

## items wanted

A BEST CASH PRICE



**FOR ALL RAILWAY COLLECTIONS**  
Any gauge or age  
Hornby/Bachmann/Bowmans/ Roundhouse/Graham/Farsh/ any live steam. Also Die Cast, Corgi, Dinky, Spot On.  
0121 532 2544/07891 713547  
thetrainmaster67@hotmail.com



**A BEST CASH PRICE PAID FOR DIE CAST CARS / LORRIES / TOY SOLDIERS**  
Air fix, Britains, Corgi, Dinky, Spot on, Tri-ang. Best prices paid.  
Any condition.  
Collections bought.  
Telephone 01922 327897 or 07976 691563.  
**AUTO MEMORABILIA WANTED**

**SHELL, ESSO, CASTROL ETC ALSO GARAGE CLEARANCES**  
Old Enamel Signs, Petrol Cans, Old Jugs, Bikes and Motorbikes.

Anything old.  
**\*\* TOP PRICES PAID \*\***  
0121 532 2544/07891 713547

**DECKING WANTED** Any condition. Cash waiting. 01902 828908.

**READERS ARE ADVISED** to carefully consider all of their options before agreeing to the sale of any of their items.

**SPECTRUM GAMES** Wanted, plus any old Crash magazines wanted, also any old Sinclair magazines wanted. 01902 892918.

**WANTED**

**VINTAGE TAMIYA REMOTE CONTROL MODELS**

Also any old radio controlled models in any condition, Mardave, Kyocho, Traxxas, HPI

Team Associated, Schumacher

Big or small collections bought.

07568 585075 or 0121 532 2544.

**loans**

**READERS ARE REMINDED** that they may require professional advice before entering into obligations.

**t.v. / home entertainment**

**service**

**AERIAL AND TV SPECIALIST**  
Any TV Repairs, Plasma, LED etc. CCTV cameras supplied & fitted. Any area. Free Estimates. 7 days. Digital aerials, Sky installation, Wall mounts / TV setups. 07850 330251.

**specialists at your service**

**aerials**

**A AERIAL AND SKY SPECIALIST**  
CCTV cameras fitted/tv wallmount, free quote/area call. 07850 330251

## THANK YOU CLASSIFIEDS!



"I am very pleased with the response I get from my Classified Advertising Contract"

Steve - AA Digital Aerials

For great business results call  
**01902 319 191**

**Classified Ads**  
Brought to you by Express & Star

**AA DIGITAL AERIALS**  
AERIALS FITTED FROM £79.99  
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01543 439035 • 01922 716029

## alarms/security

## PREMIER ALARMS

Supplied and Fitted £249  
Servicing and Repairs  
12 Months Warranty  
All areas covered  
All quotes beaten!  
Call: 0121 601 9791

## building services

**G & D BUILDERS**  
Over 35 years exp  
All aspects of building work  
Extensions, loft conversions, roofing, driveways & landscaping.  
All work guaranteed  
**07837 994465 / 01902 579592**

## building supplies

**QUALITY DOORS AND HARDWOOD FLOORING** @ low prices. Call Arnold Laver 0121 533 5428.

## electricians



## fencing

**PORTWAY FENCING**  
SPECIAL OFFER  
10 Bays of quality fencing, concrete posts, gravel boards. £695  
Heavy duty panels supplied & fitted.  
0121 531 5250 / 07866 137 656  
Mon - Fri 8am - 4.30pm  
Sat 8am - 12noon  
83 Portway Rd, W'bury  
www.portwayfencing.co.uk

## gardening services

**GARDENS TIDIED** from £5 per garden, 25 years experience. Call 01902 713106 / 07813 184086.

**H GARDEN SERVICES**  
No Job Too Small!  
Free Quotes!  
07752 145554 or 07835 905090

## gas fitting

READERS ARE ADVISED

To check that anyone carrying out any gas work is Gas Safe Registered.

It is an offence under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 to carry out gas work in the UK without being on the Gas Safe Register.

## house clearances

**A ABSOLUTE BEST** cash price paid for house clearances and bereavements. Also removals undertaken. 07852 172641 / 07710 360327

## plastering

**M & S PLASTERING & BUILDING SERVICES.** Home/Garden Improvements. Mark or Sara: 07741 770897  
**STEVES PLASTERING SERVICE**  
Clean and Reliable. All Work Undertaken. All Areas. Call 0121 567 5919 / 07977 262943.

## removals

**KT HOUSE REMOVALS**  
12 years experience.  
SINGLE ITEMS TO FULL LOADS.  
LOCAL OR DISTANCE. FULLY INSURED.  
Free Quotes - Call Ric on:  
**07771 727119**  
CALL DEAN NOW: For all your Removal needs. 07429 453209 / 01902 830870 / 01384 940260.

## rubbish removal

**LETS TALK RUBBISH** No Skips Needed/Load/Remove any Waste, House Clearance. 07969 628382

## skip hire

**MT SKIPS & GRAB HIRE**  
Save ££££  
All size skips and all areas covered  
Same day delivery faster than a phone call!  
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## Express & Star

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Call Claire Smith: 01902 319661  
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**0121 602 0346**  
**07904 736165**

**OVERHAUL ROOFING**  
We specialise in:  
New Roofing, Re Roofing, Leak Repairs, Emergency Repairs, Lead Work, Tiling and Slating.  
**07476 834512 0121 4204374**  
www.stoppsandpage.co.uk

4

## Pets & Animals

## equestrian corner

**ALL READERS** are advised to check if Horses, Donkeys or Ponies have the required Passport information.

## guns & dogs

**NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS**  
Advertisers must ensure that they meet all necessary legal requirements for owning and using guns.

**BSA 1933** vintage breakdown pattern air rifle, £180. 01746 766106.

## pets corner

**NOTICE TO READERS**  
Please be aware that when purchasing a puppy there are some simple guidelines you can follow to ensure that you are not purchasing from a Puppy Farmer:

1. Try to ensure you visit the puppy whilst it is still with its Mother.
2. Do not arrange to collect a puppy from any other location than that of the breeder.
3. Ensure that you are given any KC documentation, if pedigree. Whilst Midland News Association publications take great care to avoid publication of advertisements from Puppy Farmers we cannot accept any liability should readers purchase from this kind of establishment.

**PEDIGREE** black and Golden Labrador Pups, dogs and bitches, £400 each. 07938 598881.

**5 Business & Farming**  
business opportunities

**READERS** are recommended to take appropriate professional advice before entering into any obligations.

6

## Property

## accommodation to let

**A FURNISHED ROOM** for mature working person, £275pcm, inc all bills. No Dss. W-ton 07957 595840.

**NOTICE TO READERS**  
It is an offence under the Accommodation Agencies Act 1953, for an Agency to charge a fee simply for the registration of your requirements and/or supplying particulars of premises to let.

**NOTICE TO READERS**  
Readers are advised to seek independent legal advice before entering into any financial commitments/contracts.

**MODERN 3-BED** and 2-bed Flats, Penn Fields, close to amenities. Excellent. No DSS. £128pwk / £112pwk. 07449 545343.

**SMART SINGLE ROOMS** in Shared house, Netherton. £85 p.w. inc. bills. No DSS. 2 weeks deposit. 07940 116130.

**TWO BED** House, Parkfields, W-ton, DG, GCH, recently refurbished. £475pcm. 07813 279763.

## accommodation wanted

**SELF CONTAINED ACCOMMODATION**

Wanted for single mature lady and well behaved dogs.

Darlaston/Wednesbury area. Working part time but substantial bond available.

07749 375976.

## flats for sale

GROUND FLOOR

## APARTMENT

Two bedroom,

situated in the village of Penn,

large parking area.

£110,000 ono.

01902 331155.

## overseas property

**NOTICE TO READERS**  
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**01384 500 500** **30 yrs**

www.black-countryhomes.co.uk \* subject to terms

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**CASH NOW FOR YOUR HOUSE**  
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CASH ADVANCE NOW (in 24hrs)  
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• Any area • Repossessions stopped • Deceased estates  
Call free 24 hours subject to terms  
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We are looking for houses in your area. We will take any type of property in any condition. Call us first - highest prices paid  
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straight forward investment solutions

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**national homeowners helpline.co.uk**  
in a mess? talk in confidence we can help  
**WE PAY MORE ANY AREA ANY CONDITION**  
24-7 **0800 085 7499** 24-7 **0121 308 7786**

**Home Cash Buyer**  
Sell today, sign today, complete when u wish  
**£££ RENT BACK OPTIONS £££**  
**Houses / Land Required**  
Ring Paul 24/7 Local **07870 341 089**  
Sandwell area: Call 0121 696 4154  
Walsall & Cannock area: Call 01922 432049  
Wolverhampton: Call 01902 489901  
www.homecashbuyer.co.uk

**7 Jobs**

**8 Motoring**

full time - general

cars over £1500

HAVE YOU CHECKED your advertisement today? We would respectfully remind advertisers that it is their responsibility to inform the publishers of any mistakes or inaccuracies on the first day of publication.

**The Earls High School**  
Furnace Lane, Halesowen,  
West Midlands, B63 3SL  
Tel: 01384 816105  
Email: recruitment@earls.dudley.sch.uk



**TEACHING ASSISTANT - LEVEL 3**  
Grade 5, Scale Points 18 - 21  
£6,134 - £6,836 p.a.

This is a temporary, part time post, 3 hours per day, term time only (38 weeks).

Please contact the School for further details and an Application Form or visit our website: [www.earlshighschool.org](http://www.earlshighschool.org)  
CLOSING DATE: Monday, 25th September 2017

The Earls High School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.  
This post is subject to an enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service check.

**BMW BMW 318i**  
2011, 79,000 Miles, Black, electric windows, air bag, air con, fsh, alarm, Stereo, CD, Leather  
Interior  
£5,000  
07906423081

**CHEVROLET AVEO LS**  
Petrol, 1.2cc, silver, good clean car inside and out, 34,230 miles, MoT till September 2018.  
£2,300 ono.  
07787 424281. 01902 238488.

**FORD FIESTA TITANIUM 1.4**  
5dr Automatic  
33,500 miles, 9 months MoT, metallic silver, 2 lady owners, very good condition.  
£5,950.  
07910 263625.

**FORD FIESTA ZETEC**  
2007, 1.6TDCi 64,000 Miles, Blue, abs, electric windows, electric mirrors, fsh, alarm long MoT Superb condition.  
£2,295  
01902 897680

**MUST BE SEEN**  
**HYUNDAI GETZ CDX**  
2005, silver, 1300cc, petrol, 5dr hatchback, 40,000 miles, full MoT.  
£1,700 o.n.o.  
07798 687756

**MAZDA 1.8 MX5 MK111**  
2007, blue convertible, MoT July 2018, 59,080 miles, 2 keys, very good condition, £3,900 ono.  
01902 333072.

**MERCEDES SLK 200**  
Petrol, automatic, 69k miles, Mercedes FSH. Very good condition. Black leather. Bluetooth. Heated seats. Airscarf. Private plate by separate negotiation M80 ARU  
£10,000 ono  
Phone 07790 978446

**MINI COOPER S**  
1.6, 3-dr hatchback, 2008 reg. 49,500 miles, FSH, blue with white roof, lady owner. 9 months MoT. Excellent condition.  
£4,750.  
07940 418616.

**NISSAN QASHQAI**  
**N-TEC 1500CC**  
12 months MoT, silver, extras.  
Very good condition.  
£7,250 ono  
01384 392260.

**BARGAIN**  
**PEUGEOT 107**  
2011 reg, petrol, 8 months MoT, £20 tax, Must be seen. Excellent condition.  
£1,695.  
07377 981431.

**PEUGEOT 2.0CC ALLURE**  
2005, 55 plate 46,000 Miles, BLUE, abs, electric windows, electric mirrors, air con, fsh, alarm, MoT Amazing condition.  
£1,695  
01902 897680

**MUST BE SEEN**  
**PEUGEOT 207 1.4 URBAN**  
59 Reg., silver, one lady owner from new, only 25,000 miles, MoT till November 2017, fsh, petrol, manual.  
Very good condition.  
£1,950  
07976 384855/07709 336834

**MUST BE SEEN**  
**TOYOTA YARIS 1.3**  
2005, 5dr hatchback. 2 lady owners from new. full MoT, recently serviced. Service history. Immaculate condition.  
£1,850.  
07467 562680.

**VW FOX**  
2007, 1.4, Petrol, 84000 Miles, FSH, One Previous Owner, Electric Windows, A/C, Superb Condition.  
£1,600 ono  
07977939497

**VW POLO**  
2006, 1.2, 87000 Miles, FSH, MOT Until 03/18, One Previous Owner, Great Condition.  
£1,495 ono  
01902850622

**cars under £1500**  
**FORD KA**  
Silver, 1.3, 2006, fsh, MoT March 2018, 43,000 miles, good runner, £600 ono.  
07854 606636 or 07584 294329.

**FORD KA COLLECTION**  
06 reg, 42,000 miles, MoT, two owners, looks and drives superb.  
£895  
07546 900637.

**BARGAIN**  
**FORD KIA PETROL**  
Colour Blue, mileage 61,411, MoT till Feb 2018, 1.3cc, good, clean car inside and out.  
£700 ono  
01902 238488 / 07787 424281.

**PEUGEOT 807 EXECUTIVE**  
diesel, 6 seats, 55 plate. MoT till July 2018, red 177,512 miles. Excellent runner, any trial, £750.  
07711 539835.  
01922 446423.

**BARGAIN**  
**RENAULT CLIO 1.4**  
X reg  
Red  
12 months MoT.  
£350.  
01902 578997.

**RENAULT MEGANE DYNAMIQUE**  
VVT 1.6, 3 door, 2006, 90k miles, blue, 12 months MoT, both keys, good condition. £375 ono.  
07812 679988.

**SUPER BARGAIN**  
**ROVER 45**  
Silver, X Plate, 95,000 miles, MOT to May 2018, one lady owner since new.  
£300 o.n.o  
01384 343332.

**BARGAIN**  
**SUBARU FORESTER SPORT ESTATE**  
Petrol, blue, 129,000 miles, well maintained owned by present owner for 10 years, MoT June 2018.  
£850.  
07882 316014.

**VAUXHALL CORSA SXI**  
2003, 41,000 miles, Green, one owner, FSH, good condition.  
£695 ono.  
07849 679850.

**VAUXHALL TIGRA**  
2008, 80,000 miles, blue, electric windows, air bag, electric mirrors, air con, fsh, MoT, central locking, pas, alloys, CD, leather interior.  
£1,400.  
07966 037636.



## BARGAIN

**VAUXHALL VECTRA**  
5-dr hatchback, low mileage,  
petrol, long MOT,  
very clean and reliable,  
**Cheap at only £1,200**  
07980 435999.

## classic cars

## CLASSIC CAR

**MORRIS MINOR CONVERTIBLE**  
Split screen,  
1957,  
54,000 miles,  
**Offers around £3,000.**  
07946 486829.

**WANTED, CLASSIC Car.** Private  
cash buyer. Any condition, anything  
considered.  
01630 652993 or 07773 462797.

## commercial vehicles

**FIAT DOBLO 16V MULTIJET  
PANEL VAN**  
2014,  
White,  
18,000 miles,  
MOT August 2018,  
very clean.  
£3,950  
07814 447682.

## scrap vehicles

OUR ADVERTISERS are reminded  
that it is an offence under the Scrap  
Metal Dealers Act 2013 to buy  
scrap cars/metal for cash.

**ABC AUTO SALVAGE  
WANTED URGENT**  
Scrap & MOT Failures Best  
Prices Paid ELV Registered  
Spares Always Available  
0121 557 0800 or  
0121 557 0400.  
Oldbury Area.

## vehicles wanted

**alan reed cars**  
Used cars wanted for cash.  
Top prices paid. HP settled.  
Buyer could call.  
**01562 711083 /  
07831 245313**

**CROWN MOTORS** guarantee best  
price for your unwanted cars/vans.  
07903 549849, buyer will call.

**WANTED**  
OLD CLASSIC CAR

Triumph / MG / Jaguar /  
Porsche etc anything interest-  
ing, as project / investment,  
condition not important.  
Please telephone Ron  
07424 399776.

## 9 Local Information

## public & legal notices

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Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 any persons  
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# Kia's Rio impresses on a Scottish trip

By Sharon Walters

Well I didn't fly down to anywhere in the Kia Rio but I more than comfortably tackled a 412 mile trip up (and 412 back!) to Scotland.

The new fourth-generation Kia Rio entered an incredibly tough market segment earlier this year with the Korean manufacturer having very high hopes for its best-selling car globally. So far figures look good and my road test proved to me that it certainly has the potential to fulfil those hopes.

There's a range of high-tech engines, good fuel efficiency and emissions, plus good looks and generous standard specification. There are a total of 10 versions in three trim grades – badged in the familiar Kia way for simplicity in 1, 2 and 3.

Starting at grade 1 and around £10,345, you get a lot more than standard spec in some of the opposition, including air conditioning, front electric windows with auto function on the driver's side, remote locking, electrically adjustable heated door mirrors, a 3.8-inch display screen, Bluetooth, auto light control, LED daytime running lights and a whole lot more. There are body-coloured bumpers, door mirror casings, steering wheel-mounted audio controls and on the safety side you get electronic stability control, vehicle stability management and hill-start assist.

Grade 2, priced from £13,745, supplements all this with 15-inch alloy wheels in place of similar-sized steel wheels, a leather-trimmed steering wheel and gearshifter, electric windows at the rear as well as the front, electric folding mirrors with LED indicator lights, a digital DAB radio, a 5-inch colour display screen, a six-speaker audio system, a reversing camera and rear parking sensors, a 3.5-inch premium supervision cluster, rear as well as front USB charging ports, cruise



The 7-inch touchscreen

control with a speed limiter and Autonomous Emergency Braking and Lane Departure Warning systems. There is chrome trim around the radiator grille, premium black cloth upholstery and a centre storage box.

Additional features on Grade 3, which starts at £16,295, include 16-inch alloy wheels, automatic air conditioning with a defogging system, black faux leather upholstery, a 7-inch display screen, heated front seats and a heated steering wheel, rain-sensing front wipers, privacy glass on the rear side windows and tailgate, satellite navigation, Android Auto and Apple CarPlay connectivity and Bluetooth with voice recognition.

Finally, the limited First Edition version at £17,455 adds 17-inch alloys, a smart key entry system and engine start/stop button, stainless steel pedals, black and red faux leather upholstery and LED rear lights. And that was the one I took on my latest Scottish adventure. The 1.0 T-GDi First Edition Eco completely surprised me in many ways. From build quality to interior finish and the way that punch and responsive little engine coped with



Kia's latest Rio has good looks on the outside and has a smart interior with generous standard specification

motorway cruising for many miles. Official figures claim just over 60mpg for a combined cycle and while they may be achievable in almost laboratory conditions, in real-life driving they are high on impossible. However I managed to achieve 56mpg covering 100 miles of A and B roads, 200 on the motorway, followed by 100 round the edge of Loch Lomond and up over the arduous Rannoch Moor. Now that's a very good result.

Plus the ride is very comfortable and with a supportive seat I didn't end up with an aching back after all those miles. There's plenty of space inside for passengers and a good-sized boot for carrying all my paraphernalia for a long weekend away walking.

The new Rio is the first car in its class with

Autonomous Emergency Braking as part of Kia's advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS). It also features a Lane Departure Warning system. Both are standard from grade 2 upwards and optional with grade 1. And, in an increasingly connected world, the Rio now offers Kia Connected Services powered by TomTom and featuring Android Auto and Apple CarPlay smartphone integration. These are standard with grade 3 and the First Edition models.

And I love Kia Connected Services with TomTom, accessed through a 7-inch touchscreen navigation system. The information available to drivers includes live traffic updates, weather reports, speed camera locations and local point-of-interest

searches. And it is all so easy to use. Much more expensive cars often leave me frustrated at their less than instinctive systems.

The system is compatible with Android Auto and Apple CarPlay. Ideal for me as an Apple user and my partner an Android fan! Both allow you to connect to various apps and functions, including voice-guided, hands-free calls and texts and voice recognition. Android Auto gives access to Google Maps navigation and Google Play music, while CarPlay links to pre-loaded maps, music, podcasts, texts and messages and audiobooks through Siri voice control.

Rio is being touted as more of a second car but it is more than up to being the main family set of wheels.

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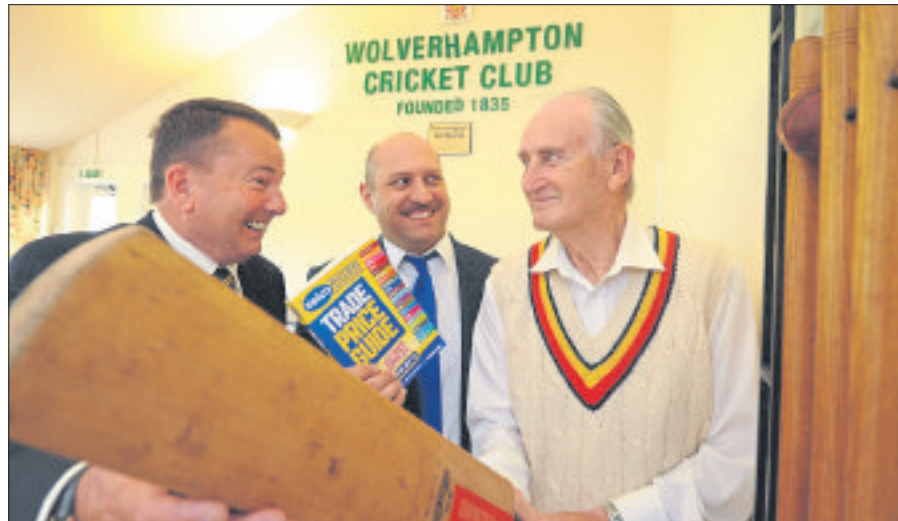
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Ted Dexter batting for Lavinia in May 1976. Deryck Murray is keeping wicket for West Indies



Ted Dexter, with, from left, community development officer Paul Windridge and Selco's Carl Cook



Ted recently moved to Wolverhampton to be nearer his family



Ted Dexter who captained his country in Ashes series

# Love remains strong for a great innovator

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Without the man known as 'Lord Ted' we may not have one-day cricket, central contracts or even individual Test rankings, for Ted had a big hand in the infancy of all three.

And now, at the grand old age of 82, his desire for the game he loves is as strong as ever. He watches every England game on television and is even travelling Down Under this winter to take in an Ashes test.

"My appetite for watching the game hasn't lessened at all, I love it," he said. "I'm an armchair critic if ever there was one! Occasionally I yell at the television set, usually at the commentators. Then I turn them off!"

"I watch all of England's games on television. I really don't think I'd pay good money to see a Twenty20 game but I quite like the 50-over game, that's quite intellectual. And Test matches are very special.

## Adventure

"I'm hoping to go for a few days and get to the Adelaide Test in November. Quite an adventure really, we didn't use to think anything of it."

First things first, then. As a man who captained England in Australia, what does he think of the current team's chances of success this winter?

"Australia as the home team has always got a bit of an edge."

Dexter, speaking at Wolverhampton Cricket Club, said: "It depends how we start. Andrew Strauss's team (in 2010/11) played some of the best cricket ever seen by England over there.

"I remember at Adelaide we never gave them a sixpence – the fielding was fantastic, we took all our catches and we were unstoppable.

"I think this team's capable of that. They're a little bit up and down but they're no pushovers that's for sure.

"Joe Root is a pleasure to watch and Johnny Bairstow is a very fine player, he's got a lot going for him.

"We haven't got anything absolutely outstanding in the bowling line-up but they're all competent and do

## SPORTING FEATURE

By Tim Spiers

***"My appetite for watching the game hasn't lessened at all, I love it. I'm an armchair critic if ever there was one!"***

a job. Ben Stokes offers something a bit special and is a wonderful player.

"Alastair Cook seems to be full of runs and has a great appetite for it, which is surprising considering what he's done.

"He's a very interesting character, quite a phlegmatic guy. I don't think the captaincy necessarily got him down. I mean he did go through a patch when his footwork collapsed all together, everything moved except his feet. Australia's batting is a bit suspect from time to time, apart from Steve Smith."

Dexter played 62 times for England in the 1950s and 60s, captaining them on 30 occasions

He recently moved to Wolverhampton from France to be nearer his family. But wherever he goes you suspect he's never far away from regaling his favourite cricket memory, when England took the lead in an Ashes series under Dexter's stewardship in 1962.

"The stand-out memory is from Melbourne when we beat Australia to go 1-0 up in the series – it was a great win," he said. "But not only that we really showed some good form. I don't think they'd ever seen an England team play like we did.

"We played an Australian XI just before that game. Now it wouldn't be so extraordinary, but we got 435 on the first day and all the media really sat up.

"As a result of that we got superb crowds – we had over 300,000 people watch in the five days. There were more than 40,000 in on the last day when we needed 250 to win, which we proceeded to do...that was a high!"

The five-match series finished 1-1 and Dexter had more than made his mark with scores of 70, 99, 93

and 52 in his first four innings, part of a series of six consecutive half-centuries.

A swashbuckling player, it's no surprise Dexter thinks he'd be handy at Twenty20 cricket – not that he particularly enjoys watching it.

"Twenty20 is good fun but it's hit and miss," he said. "Whether you get wickets or runs is largely coincidental. I'd have enjoyed playing it though, I think.

"We used to play 40-over cricket on Sundays and I said it's good fun to play because it's more of a team game. People talk about the benefits of team cricket and character and everything like that but actually proper cricket is an individual game, not like football, somebody's got to pass you the ball.

"In cricket you walk out there and there's nobody helping you. People catch catches but that's about it.

"The 40-over game, everybody had to pull their weight, particularly fielding, every run counted. And running between the wickets you had to be really on the ball."

Dexter's trailblazing in Sunday cricket led to the formation of what's now known as one-day cricket, one of several innovations from his varied and unforgettable career.

## Proud

"It makes me proud," he added. "I've been quite an innovator all the time really.

"A few things I started have taken root. When I took the job as chairman of selectors I said I don't want to do it, but if you want to give me overall responsibility for the whole running of international cricket I'll do it.

"I was the first person to give players what they called winter contracts. Slowly they became fully employed and they're now making a lot of money!

"In those days there really wasn't much money but to get on the tour was important, that was your winter money. I look back on my career with great affection, they were great years.

"I'm very lucky to have been involved, led the side to Australia where we did very well.

"You're coming down from a high after that and you have to go to work and wonder what you're going to do with the rest of your life. But I've had a great life."

## Golf champs in the swing for Mauritius

TWO golfers are swapping the Black Country for the island paradise of Mauritius after winning national titles at The Belfry.

Coseley's Steve Holmes and Walsall's Shaun Mason will be among six winners of the American Golf championships, held at the world famous course, who will be jetting out next month to compete against each other at a course on the Indian Ocean island.

Holmes, who plays at Penn Golf Club in Wolverhampton, qualified by winning the nine-hole championship while Mason, a member at The Chase Golf Club near Penkridge, won the par three title.

Holmes overcame Jason Owen in his final but his trip to Mauritius might not be in the bag just yet, as he admitted: "I can't believe it, but my gaffer won't believe it either because I've got no holidays left!"

Par three championship winner Mason beat Oxley Park member Paul Stokes in his decider on the Belfry's Brabazon course after qualifying at the previous round held at 3 Hammers Golf Complex in Coven.

## Tai: I'll fight to the end in world title bid

WOLVES asset Tai Woffinden has vowed to keep his bid for a third world title going right until the final round in Australia.

The rider insists he's still in a good place despite slipping down the standings with a terrible Teterow display.

He managed just five points in the German FIM Speedway Grand Prix and slipped to fifth spot – but more significantly he's now 20 points behind series leader Jason Doyle. There are three rounds left, in Stockholm, Torun and Melbourne.

Woffinden said: "I'll keep fighting because the title won't be decided until Melbourne in my view. I know where I went wrong with the set-up, I'll be making sure that doesn't happen again.

"It only takes one bad round and you slip down the table. Then you can bounce back and have a couple of good rounds and you can be right back in there and that's my plan. I'm still feeling good, I've been going good in Poland and Sweden and I'm ready for the three remaining rounds now."

## Partnership launched for walking football

PLAYERS flocked to the Jack Hayward training ground for the launch of a partnership between a football charity and healthcare business.

Wolves Community Trust and home care service Secure Healthcare Solutions teamed up to bring walking football to the city.

Wolves stars Léo Bonatini, Ivan Cavaleiro, Ruben Vinagre and Roderick Miranda all got stuck in to the six-a-side low-impact sport to mark the partnership. The sport, which can be played either indoors or outdoors, doesn't allow running and only allows low impact tackling with the ball remaining below head height. It is aimed at those aged over 40 or with limited mobility who are looking to remain active through playing football.

One of those is Stuart Dudwell, 60, who has been playing with wife Tracy, 50, for the last eight months after bouncing back from two hip replacements and battling through diabetes. The couple got stuck into the game at least four times a week, regularly playing at the Bert Williams Centre in Bilston and the Banks's Stadium in Walsall.





## Yeltz win to lift off from bottom spot

**Grantham Town 1 Halesowen Town 2**  
HALESOWEN moved off bottom as they grabbed only their second league win this season.

The Lincolnshire made the running from the start, Daniel Platt being equal to Jordan Hemenstall's early shot and then tipping one over the bar.

Luke Shearer had the Yeltz's best chance in the first half hour, shooting over. But he made no mistake seven minutes later when Dominic Smith got on the end of a Jack Kelly corner only to see his shot parried to Shearer, who scored.

Three minutes later though it was 1-1 when Andrew Wright was allowed far to much room in the box from a corner and put the ball past Platt. Halesowen's Cameron Steele had the best chance of the rest of the half when he flashed a shot just wide.

A substitution on 77 minutes proved crucial as Roland Agbor replaced Shearer and set up Daniel Udoh for what proved to be the winner 10 minutes from time.

**Farsley Celtic 3 Halesowen Town 1**  
Halesowen's poor start to the season continued as they lost to high-flying Farsley Celtic, who went joint top with Warrington on points.

Ryan Watson put Farsley - joint top - in front after Daniel Platt could only parry his shot and he followed it up. Richard Marshall put Farsley two ahead on 31 minutes and that was the score at half time. Halesowen's Daniel Udoh was brought down by Adam Clayton on 63 minutes when through on goal with the latter receiving a straight red. Lee Chilton took advantage of the extra man advantage when he side-footed home a Cecil Nyoni cross. James Walshaw got the third for Farsley.

## Glassboys' home tie in cup draw

STOURBRIDGE have been handed a home clash against either Alfreton Town or AFC Rushden & Diamonds in the third qualifying round of the FA Cup.

Leon Broadhurst rolled back the years with a double to send the cup specialists into the next round with a 2-1 home victory over St Ives Town.

The Glassboys made history by getting to the third round last year.

Meanwhile, Gary Hackett's men were back in league action on Tuesday when they grabbed a 2-1 victory at Mickleover Sports thanks to Aaron Forde and Jack Duggan.

Also in the FA cup draw, Kidderminster Harriers are heading up north to take on Newcastle Benfield.

Stafford Rangers have been drawn at home against AFC Telford United in the FA Cup third qualifying round.

The ties are due to be played across the weekend of Saturday, September 30, with winning clubs receiving £7,000.

## Mum's the word for 'Black Widow'

HAVING dedicated her debut win to her late father, female boxer Lauren Johnson is hoping to do her mother proud when she steps back in the ring next weekend.

While 'The Black Widow' prepares for her second professional bout on BCB Promotions' 'You Asked For It' show at Walsall Town Hall her mum, Pearline, is fighting her own battle as she recovers from a stroke.

It's been a tough few months for the family but the 32 year-old is using the situation as motivation as she aims to follow up her impressive

debut performance with another victory. "It's been tough," the Willenhall boxer admitted. "I got pulled out of the show in May because of an injury to my hand. Then ahead of the last fight, scheduled for July, my mum had a stroke three weeks before so Errol (Johnson, head of boxing at BCB) decided it would be best for me to be pulled out of that too."

"It has been very hard for me to keep going with that. My dad died in 2015 so now I just have my mum and it was very difficult to accept her being ill too. But I am back on track now."

Topping 'You Asked For It', sponsored by Grosvenor Casino Walsall, is the Midlands Area Middleweight Title clash between undefeated prospects Tom Stokes (West Bromwich) and Tyler Denny (Rowley Regis).

Bloxwich super bantamweight James Beech Junior, Wolverhampton's super flyweight Kyle Williams and Kingswinford super welterweight Danny Ball also feature.

Tickets are on sale at £35 and £60 ringside with the latter including a light buffet, from the Town Hall box office on 0845 111 2900.

# CAPTAIN BOWS OUT IN STYLE

**RETIRING Halesowen skipper Richard Brooker bowed out in style by leading his side to promotion from Division Two.**

And he admitted the celebrations capped a remarkable transformation after fearing a relegation scrap in the early weeks of the campaign.

But Hales sealed their spot in the top flight with a win by seven wickets over Pershore at Seth Somers Park with Brooker himself taking 5-16 and Eddie Rhodes 3-26 as the visitors were dismissed for 104 in 45.3 overs.

Halesowen were then set a revised target of 95 from 40 overs after a rain delay. Unbeaten 47 from Jamie Harris saw them home and helped them back to Division One for the first time in six seasons.

### Perfect

A jubilant Brooker said: "If you had to write a script to end the season then this would have been it. It's been the perfect day."

"After five games of the season we feared a relegation battle was on our hands having lost four games on the bounce and it's taken a hell of an effort from every player to drag us to this feat."

"We always knew we were better than what we were showing on the field but we needed a kick-start to move the season along."

Brooker also had praise for champions Oswestry and key people at the Halesowen club.

"I would like to take the opportunity to congratulate Oswestry," he said. "Despite an horrendous couple of weeks off the field with their talisman chairman passing away, they have truly deserved the title. They led from start to finish."

"Closer to home, I want to thank all the players for sticking with me and putting in the performances that have carried us across the line. Every time I have asked for more they have responded. Our chairman Richard Evans, the committee and Gary Patchett, our head groundsman deserve much praise."



Skipper Richard Brooker's promoted Halesowen are back in Division One for the first time in six seasons

## Disappointment at curtain-raiser gala

HALESOWEN Swimmers travelled to Leicester for the Braunstone Sports Trophy, a traditional curtain raiser to the season.

Captain Josh Bradley got the team off to a fine start winning the 100m individual medley. Rob Jennings won the 15 and under boys 100m butterfly,

Emma Bird won the ladies 100m backstroke and Jack Simpson won the men's 100m freestyle.

The bright spot of a tough evening was the dominant display of the men's relay team who comfortably won both the medley relay and six-man freestyle relay events. The team was Mark Laing, Ryan Larkin,

James Cuthbert and Jack Simpson, joined by Josh Bradley and Rob Jennings in freestyle.

That strong performance could not mask disappointment as the club came fourth at an event they have won for the past seven years. Braunstone A won with 332 points, Hales scored 235.

## Heathens pay price for no home

CRADLEY will complete their Travel Plus National League campaign against Eastbourne at Perry Barr next Wednesday, September 27.

But the club will now miss out on the play-offs as they have been unable to gain the necessary points before this weekend's cut-off to make the top four - despite asking league bosses to consider an extension to the deadline.

In a disappointing end to the campaign, Heathens have also conceded their Knockout Cup tie with Belle Vue in order to allow the competition to progress. They were 28-points down from the first leg.

Heathens director Nigel Pearson said: "These circumstances are far from satisfactory but we have, ultimately, paid the price for not having a track of our own with access to regular racing."

"We have run out of dates and it all means our season will end next Wednesday with our final league meeting."

"I didn't like the idea of pulling out of the cup, none of us at the club did, but we could have delayed it, sat on it, and that would have been no good to anyone as it's still only the quarter-final stage."

"By doing this we allow the competition to continue and with a 28-point deficit with injuries we were unlikely to turn it around."

Heathens race their last away meeting at the Isle of Wight today (Thursday) with another severely depleted team due to fixtures clashes and injuries.

## Lichfield leave Old Hales pointless

OLD HALESONIANS are bottom of the Midlands Premier and still without a point following a 27-19 defeat at Lichfield.

Two tries early in the second half for the hosts left the visitors with too much to do, as a late fightback fell short.

Josh Massey's try was the only score of an opening half where defences were very much on top. But Lichfield opened up a 22-0 advantage after the break, Calum Turner one of the men to cross.

Old Hales fought back with three tries to cut the deficit to just three points, yet any hopes of a victory were erased when Jack Fielding broke clear to score.

★★★

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